

# **LOK SABHA DEBATES**

## **(English Version)**

**Tenth Session**  
**(Fourteenth Lok Sabha)**



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# CONTENTS

(Fourteenth Series, Vol. XXVII, Tenth Session, 2007/1929 (Saka)

No. 32, Thursday, May 17, 2007/Vaisakha 27, 1929 (Saka)

| SUBJECT   | COLUMNS |
|---|---------|
| ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS .....   | 1-37    |
| *Starred Question Nos. 602-605, 608-610 .....   | 3-37    |
| WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS .....  | 37-283  |
| Starred Question Nos. 606, 607 and 611-621 .....  | 37-53   |
| Unstarred Question Nos. 5741-5931 .....   | 53-283  |
| PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE .....  | 283-293 |
| MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA .....  | 293     |
| INDIAN PARLIAMENTARY PARTICIPATION AT THE 115TH ASSEMBLY<br>OF INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU)  |         |
| Report .....  | 293     |
| COMMITTEE ON PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE   |         |
| Twelfth Report and Minutes .....  | 294     |
| STANDING COMMITTEE OF RAILWAYS  |         |
| Statements .....  | 294     |
| STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS   |         |
| Eighteenth and Nineteenth Reports .....   | 295     |
| STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS .....   | 295-302 |
| (i) Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in<br>8th, 10th and 11th reports of Standing Committee on Defence   |         |
| Shri S.K. Antony .....  | 295     |
| (ii) Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in<br>16th report of standing Committee on Coal and Steel on<br>Demands for Grants (2006-07) pertaining to the Ministry of Mines |         |
| Shri Sis Ram Ola .....  | 297     |

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\*The sign + marked above the name of a Member indicate that the Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by that member.

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| (iii) Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in 94th and 105th reports of Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on Demands for Grants (2005-06 and 2006-07) pertaining to the Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways (Department of Shipping) |         |
| Shri K.H. Muniyappa .....  | 298     |
| (iv) Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in 21st report of Standing Committee on Agriculture on Demands for Grants (2006-07) pertaining to the Ministry of Food Processing Industries  |         |
| Shri Subodh Kant Sahay .....   | 299     |
| (v) Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in 15th report of Standing Committee on Coal and Steel pertaining to the Ministry of Coal  |         |
| Dr. Dasari Narayan Rao .....   | 300     |
| (vi) Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in 21st and 24th reports of Standing Committee on Railways  |         |
| Shri R. Velu .....   | 301     |
| (vii) Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in 44th report of Standing Committee on Finance  |         |
| Shri Prem Chand Gupta .....  | 301     |
| SUBMISSION BY MEMBERS .....  | 302-330 |
| (i) Re: Dera Sacha Sauda .....   | 302-309 |
| (ii) Re: Deleting of regional languages except Tamil in destination boards in trains throughout the country .....  | 310-319 |
| (iii) Re: Killing of six Hindi speaking people by ULFA in Assam .....  | 319     |
| MATTERS UNDER RULE 377 .....   | 331-335 |
| (i) Need to incorporate necessary changes in railway catering policy to protect the interest of small vendors  |         |
| Shri Chandra Mani Tripathi .....   | 331     |
| (ii) Need to check eviction of tribals from their natural dwellings in Madhya Pradesh  |         |
| Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey .....  | 332     |



- (iii) Need to rehabilitate Indian doctors who were forced to leave United Kingdom

Shri Avinash Rai Khanna ..... 333

- (iv) Need to conduct an inquiry into alleged irregularities in the Pradhanmantri Gram Sadak Yojana and Bharat Nirman Yojana in Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh

Shri Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma ..... 333

- (v) Need to expedite completion of pending projects on N.H. 24 for the benefit of people in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh

Shri Santosh Gangwar ..... 334

- (vi) Need to run a direct train from Bolangir (Orissa) to Allahabad and extend Howrah-Sambalpur-Howrah Ispat Express upto Titlagarh

Shri Prasanna Acharya ..... 335

- (vii) Need to make available Rs. 5 coin released recently in recognition to the contribution of Sree Narayana Guru and instal his statue at a prominent place in the Capital

Shri P.C. Thomas ..... 335

TYRE CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED (DISINVESTMENT OF OWNERSHIP) BILL, 2007 ..... 332-336

MIZORAM UNIVERSITY (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2007 ..... 337-351

Motion to Consider

Shrimati D. Purandeswari ..... 337

Shri Tapir Gao ..... 338

Dr. Thokchom Meinya ..... 339

Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan ..... 341

Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh ..... 344

Shri Ajoy Chakraborty ..... 344

Shri Mani Charenamei ..... 346

Shri Suravaram Sudhakar Reddy ..... 347

Clauses 2 and 1

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Motion to Pass.....                             | 351     |
| DISCUSSIONS UNDER RULE 193 .....                | 352-394 |
| (i) <b>Global Warming</b> .....                 | 352-364 |
| Shri A. Raja. ....                              | 354     |
| (ii) <b>Price Rise</b> .....                    | 365-394 |
| Shri Anant Gangaram Geete .....                 | 365     |
| Shrimati Archana Nayak .....                    | 367     |
| Shri Ram Kripal Yadav .....                     | 370     |
| Shri P. Chidambaram .....                       | 375     |
| BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE .....               | 365     |
| Thirty-eighth Report.....                       | 365     |
| VALEDICTORY REFERENCE .....                     | 394-398 |
| NATIONAL SONG—Played .....                      | 398     |
| ANNEXURE-I                                      |         |
| Member-wise Index to Starred Questions .....    | 399-400 |
| Member-wise Index to Unstarred Questions .....  | 400-406 |
| ANNEXURE-II                                     |         |
| Ministry-wise Index to Starred Questions.....   | 407-408 |
| Ministry-wise Index to Unstarred Questions..... | 407-410 |

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## LOK SABHA DEBATES

### LOK SABHA

Thursday, May 17, 2007/Vaisakha 27, 1929 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 602.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. RATAN SINGH AJNALA (Tarantaran): Mr. Speaker, Sir...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Ajnala Sahib, I earnestly request you to sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please raise this issue at 12 o' clock.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All of you please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA (Hoshiarpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is peace in Punjab for the last 10 years. Peace is being disrupted in Punjab  
...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Every day I am requesting the Leaders to tell me. The House does not belong to me. I cannot run the House.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may say five past twelve...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am telling them that they will get time after 12 o'clock. You may please sit down for now.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I should not say '12 o' clock'.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

I am sorry. I withdraw it. You know that my Hindi is not that good. Please, you can raise it after the Question Hour.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Will it do if I say. 'Please speak after Question Hour'?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please, you speak after Question Hour.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have never prevented any Member to raise important matter. I understand your feelings. Question-Hour is very important. It is for the Members to ask Questions.

[Translation]

All of you please sit down.

11.01 hrs

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 602. Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil.

### Grounding of Planes of IA and AI

+

\*602. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL :

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of planes of Air India and Indian Airlines that remained grounded in the last six months in respect of each company;

(b) the reasons for their grounding in each case; and

(c) the remedial measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL):

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

#### Statement

(a) and (b) Air India operated 15973 flights from 1st November, 2006 to 30th April, 2007. During this period there were 46 Aircraft on Ground (AOG) of which 38 were due to technical reasons. Similarly, Indian Airlines operated 52,463 flights from 1st November, 2006 to 30th April, 2007. During this period there were 146 AOG of which 138 were due to technical reasons. These AOG were due to snags/incidents, which were technical as well as, non-technical in nature. Technical snags do occur on aircraft regardless of age due to failure/unserviceability of various components/parts, damage to engine, tyre burst, hydraulic leak, pressurization snags, etc.

(c) While specific steps to avoid recurrence of such happenings are taken on receipt of the investigation report, Air India and Indian Airlines aircraft are maintained to the highest airworthiness standards under the Continued Airworthiness Programme. All the tasks are carried out as required by Original Equipment Manufacturers' (such as Boeing, Airbus, General Electric, Pratt & Whitney etc.) Maintenance Planning Document (MPD) and schedules approved by Directorate General

of Civil Aviation (DGCA). The infrastructure used by Air India/Indian Airlines is as per recommendations made by Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs).

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I must congratulate the Minister because after his taking over as the Minister of Civil Aviation, under the Open Sky Policy not only the number of aircraft has increased, it has also brought economy to the passengers. I would like to put one or two questions.

Due to the shortage of control equipment and the ground facilities, the operation has become difficult. Due to the shortage of pilot or other technical reason grounding of aircraft takes place. As a result of the grounding of aircraft, there is some congestion of aircraft at the airport. Some steps should be taken so that the grounding of aircraft is minimized. How can the Minister help in this connection?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, the Question relates to the composition of various elements. Nonetheless, I will endeavour to answer. The question of congestion is the phenomenon which is present in all major airports across the world wherever traffic is there. Especially, in our Indian context we must appreciate that in the last three years, traffic has grown more than 100 per cent at the major airports. Yet, with the same infrastructure we are able to cope to the extent possible. Of course, during peak hours, there is traffic congestion and again I would like to inform the House that phenomenon would be there in every major airport across the world. However, in terms of the shortage of pilots, there is some shortage of pilot but I do not think that is the reason for delay or other related issue because airlines plan their schedule according to the number of pilots they have on their roster. Nonetheless, it will be our endeavour to see whatever is available to improve whatever the situation is at present.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Sir, I had asked one question, regarding control equipment for the landing and take off facility, which the Minister did not reply.

Secondly, there is a talk in the Media that Air India and Indian are likely to be merged. Can grounding of

aircraft come down after this merger? What major steps the Minister has taken to minimize the grounding of aircraft so that the passengers are not put to inconvenience?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: As far as the Air Traffic Control situation which the hon. Member asked in the first part of his supplementary is concerned, I think the Air Traffic Control Equipment is upgraded from time to time. There is a comprehensive programme to upgrade it across the country. In fact, by next year, hopefully India will be the fourth in the world after the US, Japan and Western Europe to have the satellite based navigation system that will be more accurate, more precise and will be able to handle larger capacity of aircraft in the air at any given time.

However, as far as ATC equipment and training are concerned, there is a lot of upgradation, on a constant basis, going on. The ATCs were not employed between 1999 and 2004. Therefore, the backlog was there but now on a constant basis, there is induction of ATCs in the system. As a result, the shortage has come down and we are able to handle more traffic in a more faithful and reliable manner.

MR. SPEAKER: It is a very comprehensive reply.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, he also raised a point about merger. I should have endeavoured to answer that. As regards merger, definitely merger will bring more synergies and better working of the airlines. However, the real issue what is ailing Air India and Indian has been the old aircraft in the fleet for so many years. In fact, I said it on the earlier occasions also the last planes order for Indian was when the late Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister. So you can imagine after so many years, we have last year placed the orders. The planes are now going to be inducted from June this year onwards both for Air India and Indian. This will eventually, of course, result in better operations and lesser technical or other delays.

MR. SPEAKER: You have answered beyond the question.

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY: Sir, I do not know

whether it is wilful or not but the authorities of Indian and Air India are pushing their passengers to the private airlines. Now-a-days, the passengers are preferring to travel by the private airlines due to non-punctuality of the Indian. Nobody knows when the flight will start and when will it reach?

MR. SPEAKER: The question is about grounding.

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY: Sir, it appears from the reply given by the hon. Minister that the 38 aircraft of Air India and 138 aircraft of Indian have been grounded for the technical reasons. I would like to know whether it is a fact that there is non-availability of pilot and technical staff, with the result, the Airport Authority management is going to reduce the technical staff. They have not filled up the vacancies created due to retirement, especially of technical staff. If it is a fact, please inform us.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, there is no real shortage of technical or other manpower. In fact, I would request you to help us also talk to all our colleagues in the Unions. We should all work harder to make our airlines more successful. I see no harm in making an appeal to you. I have no hesitation in making an appeal to you to help us all in making our public carriers more efficient and more competitive.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : You should resolve the pending issues.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Of course, we are going to resolve all pending issues. But at the same time, I would also like to inform the hon. Members that the Indian has been recording very high traffic figures. In fact, the highest figures of Indian have been recorded in the months of March and April consecutively. So, there is no reason that our load factor or our competitiveness is less. Of course, we have certain issues of older aircraft and other issues. But that does not come in the way of either the growth of the airline or the safety and security of the passengers. So, I would just like you to know that there is nothing so worrisome. Of course, there are issues which need to be resolved and we are doing it on a constant basis.

[Translation]

PROF. MAHADEVRAO SHIWANKAR: Sir, approximately 176 aircrafts of Air India and Indian Airlines are grounded for technical reasons. I want to ask whether the Government has ever felt the need of procuring new aircrafts during that period. If so, how many aircrafts were procured and what was the burden of the cost of such aircrafts borne by the Government.

[English]

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: It is a fact that there are some technical issues. But I would also like to inform the hon. Members of the House that these technical issues have occurred in every airline. It is not only happening with Air India or Indian...(Interruptions) I will answer your question. He is from my district. We know each other.

MR. SPEAKER: I hope, there is no special understanding.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: There is no question of technical faults occurring only in Air India and Indian. That kind of an issue, if at all is there in anybody's mind should be cleared. It happens with all airlines...(Interruptions) The Media sometimes takes our issues up a little bit more. Maybe, we have to take that also into account.

As far as new planes are concerned, yes, I just mentioned earlier after many years we are ordering planes. We have ordered 43 planes of the A-320 families for Indian and 68 planes, 50 wide-bodied and 18 narrow bodied, planes for Air India. All these planes are expected to start joining the fleet by June or July this year in a phased programme for the next four to five years

[Translation]

I want to tell you that this is not going to put any burden on the public exchequer. Indian Airlines and Air India will borrow the money according to their capacity to procure the aircrafts and repay the same like a commercial organization.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It looks like all issues have been covered.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : As far as I understand, grounding of technical reasons particularly depends on the maintenance of the aircraft and not on the age of the aircraft. Very recently, if I am not mistaken, one Bangalore based company, by name Jupitar, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Indian Airlines for the purpose of maintenance of aircraft of Indian. Indian has a fleet of Airbus. But the fleet of Air India is mostly Boeing. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether Air India has signed any such Memorandum of Understanding with any company like what the Indian Airlines has done recently for the purpose of maintenance of their fleet of aircraft.

Secondly, the new aircraft are likely to get inducted into the existing fleet only in the next three to four years in a phased manner. Till then the passengers would have to suffer because of the problem of grounding. Is it so?

MR. SPEAKER: Go by train.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, first and foremost it is being unfair to Air India and Indian, at least from the friends from this side. They should not be so critical of them...(Interruptions) It is because you are being critical unnecessarily...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No cross-talks please. Mr. Minister, you may please address the Chair.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I have to defend the position of the public carriers. We cannot say that they are in any way less than the private carriers. Of course, as I said, they have an issue which has to be resolved and it is being addressed.

On the issue of overall maintenance and repair, about which the hon. Member Shri Rupchand Pal has mentioned, when we bought the planes for Air India and Indian respectively from Airbus and Boeing respectively, the Government also added one more clause saying that they shall facilitate setting up of maintenance, repair and overhaul facilities in our country because aviation

is now growing. Most of the private airlines and our public carriers were resorting to going abroad for repairing their aircraft and for their maintenance. So, under that programme Airbus and Boeing are both proposing to set up the MRO facilities in India and Indian and Air India are free to be in joint venture with them in the way they commercially deem fit...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: He asked about whether the Government has any MoU in regard to Air India also.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Air India also has signed a MoU with Boeing as Indian has done with Airbus.

SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH : One of the reasons that the hon. Minister has outlined for grounding is, of course, technical which is linked to maintenance. Another reason for the grounding of aircraft is linked to re-branding exercise that our public carriers carry out once in a while. We saw that for aircraft of Indian when they were converted to Alliance. They were grounded for the re-branding exercise. We saw that with Air India when they changed their logos and re-branded their aircraft. We have seen that recently when Indian Airlines was converted to Indian.

Now that Air India and Indian are going to be merged, one would assume that these aircraft would have to be grounded for the re-branding exercise. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any plan has been worked to ensure that during this re-branding exercise, minimum disruption and minimum grounding of the aircraft take place.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I would like to inform the hon. Member that whenever an aircraft is painted or re-branded, it never goes out of the fleet until it goes in for major or de-check or re-check when the aircraft is in any way out for a couple of months. So, no aircraft is pulled out for re-branding until and unless it goes for a full re-check or de-check.

MR. SPEAKER: Yours is a very popular Ministry as you have so many supplementaries.

*[Translation]*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we

all know that Air India and Indian Airlines are facing challenges from private airlines.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is regarding grounding.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I am speaking on the same point. Recently I happened to go to Bali. I traveled by both, the Air India airbus as well as the Singapore Airlines airbus. There is a great difference between the two.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is regarding grounding.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I am saying very much the relevant thing. We have to be concerned about the bad condition of the aircrafts. We have to think how we will be able to compete with them. Through you, I want to know from the hon. Minister the number of aircrafts in the fleets of Air India and Indian Airlines life of which is over and the ways thought out to face the competition.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, I agree that our aircrafts are old but it may not be construed that there is any laxity in safety.

*[English]*

For the information of the House, I would like to say that the International Civil Aviation Organisation which is the apex body for aviation worldwide conducted a safety audit for India along with every country in the world and I would like to inform the House with great pride that India stood first in the safety audit for ICAO all over the world. I think, we must, as a House, commemorate the people who are working towards air travel to be safe and secure. I am not trying to undermine the question of the hon. Member. Yes, I said that there are older aircraft. We have leased aircraft. Almost 50 per cent of the fleet of the Indian or Air India is leased aircraft which cannot be compared with our own aircraft. So, there are problems but we have continued to operate at least routes which they have been doing so far.

MR. SPEAKER: This shows his infatuation for Singapore.



[Translation]

**Exodus of Employees from Railways**

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\*603. SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA:

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of employees in the Railways have resigned or are in the process of resigning their jobs and are joining the private sector as reported in "Amar Ujala" dated April 24, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of employees who have resigned their jobs during the last year; and

(d) the remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Railways to check the exodus of employees?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

**Statement**

(a) and (b) There are a few instances of Railway employees who have resigned from Railway service for personal reasons. As per records available nine railway employees have resigned to join private sector companies during 2006.

(c) About 422\* railway employees have resigned during 2006 on various grounds such as personal, medical, to join other Central/State/Public Sector Undertakings etc.

(d) Employees have the option to resign within the Service Rules by giving a notice to the effect.

\* The reply was subsequently corrected through a Correcting Statement made in the House on 29.11.2007 and was also placed in Library under LT No. 7483/2007. The revised information is as under:

No. of employees who resigned from service: 437

No. of employees who retired voluntarily: 4881

Considering the total strength of nearly 14 lakh employees on Indian Railway, the number resigning is minuscule and no special preventive measures are contemplated as at present.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I want to know from the Minister as State to which do the 422 railway employees belong whose resignations he has accepted during the year 2006 and whether they are the employees who had been affected by increased work load. Many posts of officers and workers in the railways are vacant, did they have resign due to increased pressure and work load, let the Minister tell us.

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, the Indian Railways today has about 14 lakh employees on its roll. The number of employees who resigned last year was 422 and 3645 employees went away on voluntary retirement. Both put together comes to 4000 employees and it is .3 per cent of the total strength of employees. I mean to say that resignation is a natural phenomenon in the Railways or, for that matter, in any organization. It is not a matter of concern for us in the sense that resignation may be due to personal or medical reasons or may be seeking employment elsewhere like public sector organizations.

We cannot force them to be with us. There is no question of additional burden on them because we have already got sufficient surplus staff to see that, if any vacancy arises it is filled up then and there.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA: Sir, I had asked one more question to know the names of the States to which the officers and employees of the Railways belonged to who had opted for voluntary retirement for whatever reasons, be it personal or due to harassment by their senior officers or other employees. Will the hon. Minister provide us information in this regard? Together with the above information, I want

to ask as to which class do they belong to viz. Class-I, Class-II, Class III.

MR. SPEAKER: How can the Minister provide so much details right away?

[English]

Mr. Minister, have you got the details?

SHRI R. VELU: No.

MR. SPEAKER: You can send it to her.

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY: Sir, I want to ask the hon. Minister whether some employees of CONCOR have resigned just because the Government has privatized some of its works and many more are likely to resign.

Likewise, the Government has partially privatized the catering services due to which some railway employees have resigned and a long process of resignation has started. Although, he has just said that there are 14 lakh employees in the railways but even today, there is so much shortage of employees in the railways that one conductor has to man four bogies and as a result thereof service has deteriorated. In this context, I want to know as to what step the government is taking to make good the said shortage of staff and improve the services of CONCOR which are deteriorating due to privatization and consequential pressure on the employees.

[English]

SHRI R. VELU: The Question is about the shortage of employees in railways. As I have said earlier, there is no question of shortage of employees in railways because we always maintain thirty per cent as leave reserve. In case of employees resigning or taking voluntary retirement, we fill up the vacancies. People may go to private companies. The hon. Member mentioned about CONCOR. 14 companies have expressed interest to enter container business in Railways. They have to move these containers, to start

with, from Jaipur to Mumbai, which would be extended to other places later on. There, the number of employees is very much less. Even if some of them go and join, I am not affected. Over the last ten years, on an average ten people have resigned in D-grade and above. On an average, thirty per cent have resigned or voluntarily retired every year as per the data of over the last ten years.

I am trying to mention that there is no question of shortage of employees. As I mentioned, there is no harassment. We keep our employees in good morale. We are taking care of our employees in all respects. We provide them housing facilities, free medical aid, free travel, etc to keep them in good morale.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: It is stated that about fourteen lakh workers are employed in the railways now. Some years back it was nineteen lakhs. Every year we are introducing new trains and it is said that railways is fast growing. At the same time, there is reduction in the number of employees....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is about resignations.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: I am coming to that.

MR. SPEAKER: Come to that.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : Reduction in the number of employees really affects the safety of the railways and also the service of the railways.

There are instances that a number of workers have been transferred from Palakkad Division to a new division....(Interruptions) There is no such division. But the Railways has given the order to transfer, to give the option, from the Palakkad Division to other division. But there is no such division at all.

MR. SPEAKER: The question relates to the resignation by employees. It relates to 424 employees out of 14 lakh employees.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: That is why they are compelling. The workers are compelled to resign ....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is a question of 424 employees out of 14 lakh employees.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: During the last six or seven years, there is a high reduction in the total number of workers which really affects the service of the Railways...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN: Will the hon. Minister realize that this high reduction in the Railways really affects the safety and the service of the Railways...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: What high reduction? The question is about the resignation.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, I can still answer the question...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister you know everything. That is the problem. You can answer very briefly.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI R. VELU: Sir the DoPT Circular in 2001 said that every organization is to be 'right-sized' in the country which includes Railways also...(Interruptions)

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS: It is about 'down-sizing' only...(Interruptions)

SHRI R. VELU: No, it is 'right-sizing'. Please do not say, 'down-sizing'. I will answer the question.

Sir, what happened was over the period of these three years, every year 45,000 people retire. But during the last two years, we have recruited 80,000 people at the rate of 40,000 each year. To say that at any point of time the kind of people retiring, maybe voluntarily or resigning etc., are totally taken care of by stepping up of the recruitment. I would like to mention here that why the figure of 18 lakhs has become 14 lakhs is because of the right-sizing. It is because the technology has

taken over. Where I require about 16 to 18 gangmen, today I require 14. It is because of the mechanization of the maintenance of the tracks. Where I require a number of drivers, now they are required in less number because of the technology upgradation. Though it all happened, yet we have not retrenched any employee during the last 14 years and, on the other hand, one lakh employees are rendered surplus and not one of them has been sent out. I might say emphatically to the hon. Member that Railways is one of the organizations where we will always safeguard the interests of the employees. None of them has been sent out and none of them will be sent out in future. This is for the information of the hon. Member...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry. First of all, your Supplementary does not relate to the main question.

I am sorry. Nothing will be recorded.

(Interruptions)\*...

SHRI K.S. RAO: Sir, we are very happy with the way in which the hon. Minister has replied to the question. Obviously, the Railways has got very competent, knowledgeable and experienced officers and workers in their organization. To utilize the services of these people, will the hon. Minister think in terms of having more and more projects in the public-private partnership so that the employees can be utilized there?

MR. SPEAKER: What is this? It has nothing to do with this question.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI K.S. RAO: Sir, instead of 'retrenchment' I am asking for 'reduction'.

MR. SPEAKER: You please say, 'yes' or 'no'.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, for the first time, we have opened up the Railways to the Public-Private Partnership. A number of schemes were taken up and we are utilizing our staff. When the Public-Private Partnership comes in, private person brings his own personnel. But wherever

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\*Not recorded.

required, we can supplement him. This is a good suggestion made by the hon. Member which is taken note of.

[English]

**Financial Assistance for Establishing  
Food Processing Units**

\*604. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has received proposals from various State Governments seeking financial assistance for establishment of food processing units in their States;

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

(c) the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

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

**Statement**

Yes, Sir. Under the Scheme for Technology Upgradation/Modernization/Establishment of food processing industries, the 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 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. Under 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 crores for promotion of new units and upto Rs. 1 crore for upgradation/modernization of existing units is available for processing of horticultural produce. State-wise details of proposals received and approved for assistance under the scheme during the last three years i.e. 2004-05 to 2006-07 are as follows:

| Sl. No. | Name of States/UTs | Number of proposals received | Number of proposals approved | Number of proposals closed/rejected |
|---------|--------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1       | 2                  | 3                            | 4                            | 5                                   |
| 1.      | Andhra Pradesh     | 207                          | 97                           | 58                                  |
| 2.      | Arunachal Pradesh  | 6                            | 0                            | 0                                   |
| 3.      | Assam              | 40                           | 24                           | 3                                   |
| 4.      | Bihar              | 15                           | 5                            | 5                                   |
| 5.      | Chhattisgarh       | 18                           | 10                           | 3                                   |
| 6.      | Daman and Diu      | 1                            | 0                            | 0                                   |
| 7.      | Delhi              | 20                           | 10                           | 6                                   |
| 8.      | Goa                | 7                            | 3                            | 2                                   |

| 1   | 2                 | 3   | 4   | 5  |
|-----|-------------------|-----|-----|----|
| 9.  | Gujarat           | 97  | 36  | 30 |
| 10. | Haryana           | 59  | 28  | 18 |
| 11. | Himachal Pradesh  | 41  | 19  | 6  |
| 12. | Jammu and Kashmir | 32  | 9   | 5  |
| 13. | Jharkhand         | 15  | 8   | 0  |
| 14. | Karnataka         | 107 | 63  | 26 |
| 15. | Kerala            | 87  | 54  | 8  |
| 16. | Madhya Pradesh    | 68  | 31  | 17 |
| 17. | Maharashtra       | 319 | 170 | 64 |
| 18. | Manipur           | 11  | 4   | 2  |
| 19. | Meghalaya         | 6   | 4   | 2  |
| 20. | Mizoram           | 4   | 0   | 3  |
| 21. | Nagaland          | 30  | 3   | 5  |
| 22. | Orissa            | 42  | 15  | 26 |
| 23. | Pondicherry       | 1   | 5   | 0  |
| 24. | Punjab            | 52  | 55  | 12 |
| 25. | Rajasthan         | 108 | 42  | 26 |
| 26. | Sikkim            | 1   | 0   | 0  |
| 27. | Tamil Nadu        | 138 | 81  | 33 |
| 28. | Tripura           | 1   | 1   | 0  |
| 29. | Uttar Pradesh     | 131 | 102 | 27 |
| 30. | Uttarakhand       | 47  | 25  | 2  |
| 31. | West Bengal       | 97  | 53  | 21 |
| 32. | Chandigarh        | 1   | 0   | 1  |

**Note:** Figures of approved, closed/rejected proposals in Columns (4) & (5) may not tally with the number of proposals received in Column (3), as the figures in Column (4) & (5) may include proposals received in earlier years also.

The Government has been taking various measures on a continuous basis for the promotion of food processing industries in the country. This includes encouraging State Governments to give importance to development of food processing industry and drawing up food processing industry policy in the States. The measures taken in this regard include organizing Conference of State Ministers of food processing industries, periodic interaction with State Nodal Agencies, organization of Investor's Meeting in association with Industry Associations, etc. The Ministry has also launched a publicity campaign through print and electronic media to promote the consumption of processed food.

Government has enacted an Integrated Food Law entitled "Food Safety and Standards Act 2006" in place of multiplicity of food laws and enforcement agencies. This would facilitate investment in the food processing sector.

A detailed review of the 10th Plan schemes has been undertaken and based on the findings and consultation with stake-holders, schemes in the 11th plan are being revamped. Since one of the major constraints for the low level of processing in agro-food products is lack of infrastructure such as cold chain facilities and inefficient supply chain, in the 11th Plan, the Ministry will be implementing a revamped Scheme for Infrastructure Development under which, it will give financial assistance for setting up of Mega Food Parks, cold chain infrastructure, modernization of abattoirs, setting up of quality control laboratory, etc.

Various fiscal and tax incentives have been provided to food processing industry in the form of excise duty reduction/abolition, customs duty concession on import of machinery for food processing industry.

On the basis of Vision 2015 on Food Processing Industries adopted by the Ministry, an integrated strategy and action plan for the growth of food processing industry sector has been drawn up.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: I am very proud to say that my constituency is a very sweet constituency where the

hon. Minister has also come. In fact, the whole State of Kerala is very sweet. My constituency is sweet because pineapples are grown in plenty. Kerala is very sweet because tender coconut water is available in plenty. It is available not only in Kerala but it is also available in all the other States including the hon. Speaker's constituency....(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: We are all admirers of Kerala, but now please come to the question.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: My only question is that admiration is really there. But, unfortunately, industrially we are very backward. We have got tender coconut; we have got sour items and hot items like pepper also. But there is no value addition in the real sense which the State really requires.

My question to the hon. Minister is this. Apart from the proposals for grants which are being granted, will the hon. Minister take up a scheme where a State like Kerala or other States also may do value addition to horticulture as well as commercial crops like this? These are very much possible. Has he got any crash programme or scheme by which value addition can be done in a very expeditious manner?

MR. SPEAKER: Brevity and relevance have lost all significance!

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think we have tried to expedite as much as possible. I have also visited Kerala two or three times. In the last three years, we have received almost 87 cases and out of them, we have cleared 54. We are going for decentralization also so that from the banks it should be cleared as early as possible. We have sanctioned four Food Parks for Kerala. We have covered almost all the sectors. But, if the hon. Member suggests anything specific, I am very much ready to do it on a priority basis. Whatever proposals we receive from the States, we go accordingly. From our Ministry also, from the Government side, we do not do anything directly.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Then, I would really suggest

one thing. The tender coconut water is something which can be used in the domestic market in a very fruitful way. It can also be exported. So, there are some proposals from Kerala for value addition or for packaging and sending the tender coconut water in a big way. I would plead with the Government, I would request the hon. Minister to give specific and special attention to such proposal to see that tender coconut water industries in this regard are really made to come through in the State of Kerala as well as in other States early. My request as well as question to the hon. Minister is this. Will the hon. Minister pay special heed to this matter?

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: I think the tender coconut water is very much on demand. Value can be added. It can be a source of very good, substantial income for the farmers. Hon. Member, if you are having any specific proposal, kindly let me know. Otherwise also, we have focused very much on the tender coconut, spices, marine products and rice in Kerala. These are all areas of importance. I want that Kerala should become a really successful laboratory for the food processing, value added sector. We are working on that line very hard. If you are having any specific proposal, I am ready to consider.

*[Translation]*

SHRI CHHEWANG THUPSTAN: Hon. Minister has said in his reply that a total of 32 proposals were received from Jammu and Kashmir out of which nine have been approved and five have been rejected. I know that hon. Minister had called a meeting in Shrinagar some time ago and had taken an initiative to promote food processing by inviting representatives from the three regions of the State. I would like to know the number of proposals received from Laddakh region out of the 32 proposals received from Jammu and Kashmir? What is the outcome of the meeting called by you in Shrinagar some time ago? Is any initiative being taken by the Ministry for promoting food processing in the three regions of the State as a result thereof? You have provided a lot of money for new units and upgradation for the difficult states under the Technology Mission. I

want to know whether there is any proposal to cover Sibrangthong which is emerging as an economic prospect under horticulture so that food processing units could be promoted?

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Sir, Laddakh has certainly its own climatic zone and we have also focused on its horticulture related produces. We have set up three Food Parks in Jammu and Kashmir also on the basis of cluster approach wherein common facility centers are set up so that anyone setting up industry there will have to bear the minimum costs. I cannot give the details for specific Laddakh region right now, but I will let the hon. Member know about it. If any proposal is received from the hon. Member from Laddakh or from the State Government, though we have also done a review in the meeting, with the hon. Chief Minister. Kashmir is a part of the Central Government's package of which food processing is an important component. We have provided money separately for that and it is on our priority also.

*[English]*

SHRI MANJUNATH KUNNUR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has replied that the Government of India has sanctioned 63 proposals out of a total of 107 proposals received from Karnataka for which I am thankful to the hon. Minister. In my district we are growing maize in huge quantity and we are transporting it to Sangli and Ahmedabad. We have got export quality maize in my district and we are growing it in abundance there. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he would take steps to set up a maize processing factory there to produce oil, glucose, starch and many other such products.

Then, in addition to maize, we are also growing more chilli in our area. Byadgi chilli has got international market. Even MDH Masala is getting chillies from Byadgi to prepare spices because Byadgi chilli has got good colour, good quality and good taste. But there is no oleo resin oil factory or any other food processing unit situated there. In this connection, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any proposal to

set up maize and chilli food processing units in Karnataka.

MR. SPEAKER: How do you process chilli?

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Sir, as I have already stated, we are not setting up any food processing unit on our own. I have written to the hon. Member long back requesting him to explore the possibility of setting up any food processing unit and utilize the benefit extended by the Central Government. I would request the hon. Member that if he can suggest some entrepreneurs, who are interested, then we are ready to facilitate for setting up the food processing units.

*[Translation]*

SHRI SACHIN PILOT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has said in his reply that there are some States like Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand etc. which have been given a little more subsidy and concessions. Figures show that 108 proposals were received from Rajasthan. I want to say that the hon. Minister in his reply he has said that more subsidy and concessions have been given to difficult states but does he have any specific scheme for giving more concessions to the proposals from large States like Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh which have tribal, SC and ST dominated areas? It will be very good if hon. Minister could say about it.

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Sir, so far as I remember 33% and a maximum of Rs. 75 lakh is given to the hilly States and difficult areas as per the policy. Rupees one crore under Mini Mission-4 and rupees four crore is provided for composite approach. But, we give 250% to the general states which is up to Rs. 50 lakh maximum. Therefore, a specific scheme cannot be made for any State by the planning commission and the Government separately. Though, we are taking a totally new viewpoint on all the issues in the 11th five year plan as to how to clusterize Mega Food Parks and Horticulture and make them demand driven by adopting a very aggressive approach. Many products are being wasted but they are not worthy of processing. I think,

that the hon. Member wants to say that more more and units should be set up to make it demand driven so that the farmers could get its benefits. Our Ministry is ready to help him if it is needed for this campaign and for launching it aggressively.

*[English]*

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK: Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether any special financial assistance or subsidy is provided to women self-help groups to set up food processing units.

MR. SPEAKER: Very good question.

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Sir, as such, special component is not there, but I must say that we are motivating and we are holding so many conferences, we are extending all help for training the entrepreneurs, particularly, to the self-help groups of women. I think, more than 200 training types of programmes we have extended to self-help groups, particularly, of women and other weaker sections. But as such, the scheme is same for everybody.

SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL: Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister the total amount of monetary assistance to the newly set up food processing and training centres in the States during the last year and if so, the State-wise details.

MR. SPEAKER: How can State-wise details be given?

SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY: Sir, I will pass on the whole information to the hon. Member in writing.

*[Translation]*

### **Ban on Operation on Single Engine Helicopters**

\*605. SHRI AJIT JOGI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether single engine helicopters are being flown with VIPs despite the ban on their operations;

(b) if so, whether the Directorate General of Civil



Aviation (DGCA) has taken action against the operators in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and the details of the guidelines/instructions issued by DGCA in this regard?

*[English]*

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

#### **Statement**

(a) to (c) At present, there is no mandatory instruction to fly VIPs only on multi-engine helicopters.

(d) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued an advisory Air Safety Circular 2 of 1981 for use of privately owned/state Government aircraft for carriage of Chief Ministers and other high dignitaries and had laid down number of guidelines for the aircraft operators to ensure highest standards of safety for operation of such flights. The circular is recommendatory in nature. As per this circular, twin-engine aircraft with good operational capability, reliability and easy maintainability characteristics should be used.

SHRI AJIT JOGI : Sir, several precious lives have been lost in helicopter, with single engine, accidents in our country. But the hon. Minister has said that they have not made it mandatory for the helicopters to have two engines, especially, while they are flying VVIPs.

MR. SPEAKER: No whispering please.

SHRI AJIT JOGI: Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Ministry and the Government consider that single engine helicopters are equally safe and that is why they are not issuing these instructions. If they think that single engine helicopters are not that safe, then why mandatory instructions have not been issued?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, technically, in a helicopter, whether it is single engine or twin engine,

does not mean that there is a safety issue. However, the DGCA has issued an advisory that whenever VVIPs or VIPs are traveling by helicopters, they should be traveling in twin engine helicopters. Ultimately, there is nothing on the technical record to say that a single engine is less safe than a double engine.

However, there are instances which have taken place on both single engine helicopters as well as twin engine helicopters. However, on the advisory of the DGCA, I think, the VVIPs should insist that they are traveling in twin engine helicopter. That is the best we can do as a regulator. It is because technically one cannot say that a helicopter, single engine or twin engine, is no safer or no more dangerous.

SHRI AJIT JOGI: Sir, to a non-technical person like me, twin engine would always be safer than a single engine helicopter. But the hon. Minister says that both are equally safe or both are equally unsafe.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I did not say, 'unsafe'.

SHRI AJIT JOGI: Sir, I would like to know, after every incident, an inquiry is ordered. Has some study being made of these inquiry reports, and has he come to this conclusion that single engine is as safe as the twin engine on the basis of these inquiry reports or this is just a conclusion arrived at by the DGCA?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: There are many findings on the basis of which we can certainly say that there is a detailed study taking place after every accident or incident concerning helicopters. In fact we had appointed Kaushik Committee. In October 2005, they have come out with a detailed Report for advising on helicopter safety. These recommendations have now been fully implemented. DGCA has also now set up a Special Helicopter Cell within itself about a year ago and this is in association with even the FAA to give us flying experts to advise them as to what are the recommendations which they need to implement. These are concerning air-worthiness and safety. Therefore, I can assure the hon. Member that DGCA, with the increasing number of helicopter population in the country, is looking at this aspect as meaningfully as fixed-wing aircraft.

SHRI KIREN RIJU: The hon. Minister has stated that it is not mandatory to use double engines. I would like to inform you also that in the forward areas we are more dependent on helicopters than even the vehicles. It is because it is the only means of communication and transportation. We have lost one Minister of State of the Ministry of Defence, State Minister of Education, our Secretary, and one of the important personalities from the *Times of India* also few years back. I believe that it is the maintenance and servicing which is more important for safety than double engine or single engine.

What kind of measures the hon. Minister and the Ministry are taking for better servicing in the forward areas of the border areas like Arunachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, whether the helicopter is flying in the border areas or in any other part of the country, the safety manual, the way the helicopter has to be maintained, are standard procedures laid down by the manufacturer. DGCA oversees whether these procedures are being adopted by the user or not. In fact, I would like to mention that out of 14 single engine helicopter accidents which took place in the last five years, only three are related to engines which may be attributed to maintenance or other issues. I cannot definitely conclude it, but the other incidents or the accidents were mainly due to pilot error or poor visibility or other factors. To say that single engine helicopter is not safe or it has different operating procedures, it would be probably unfair.

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 606, Shri Hansraj G. Ahir—not present.

Q. No. 607, Shri Raghunath Jha—not present.

Q. No. 608, Shri S.K. Kharventhan.

#### Examinations in the Medium of Regional Languages

608. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway Recruitment Board is

conducting examinations in the medium of various regional languages;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any regional language has been left out from this process;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether representations have been received about the problems being faced by the students from various States, particularly from Tamil Nadu in this regard; and

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

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

#### Statement

(a) and (b) No, Sir. Railway Recruitment Boards conduct written examinations in Hindi and English languages only.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

(e) and (f) No such representation(s) are under consideration.

SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN : Sir, apart from conducting the written examinations in Hindi and English, what is the difficulty in introducing one vernacular language in each of the Divisions or States?

SHRI R. VELU: We have got a uniform procedure for Group 'C'. Even the Resolution adopted by both the Houses of Parliament in 1968 said that compulsorily one must know Hindi or English to get recruited in the initial stage. That being the case, we are now adopting it for Group 'C'. But coming to Group 'D' employees who are educated only up to 8th standard, for them, from 2003 onwards, in addition to Hindi and English a local language of that area has also been introduced.

MR. SPEAKER: Very good.

**SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN :** I would like to refer to one news item appeared in *The Tribune* on 22nd November 2003 wherein the then Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar has said:

"He, however, said that the Railways would offer better recruitment facilities to the local people by allowing them to write in their respective regional languages in the Railway Board Examinations."

What is the present status in this regard? What is the practical difficulty in introducing the language which will help the deserving applicants to a great extent?

**SHRI R. VELU:** I have already answered this question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. Minister has said that it has already been introduced.

**SHRI R. VELU:** It has already been introduced in Group 'D'. In Group 'C' we are not able to do it because now a person from Jammu and Kashmir still can come and write the examination in Tamil Nadu. So, Hindi and English are common to all of them. Where that kind of qualification is not called for, in fact, for Group 'D', they are not well-versed in English or Hindi, we are introducing the local language.

**MR. SPEAKER:** You have answered it.

Now Shri Bhanwar Singh Dangawas.

*[Translation]*

**SHRI BHANWAR SINGH DANGAWAS:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I want to ask the hon. Minister a small question regarding giving recognition to the Rajasthani language. I was told in the last session that recognition would be given in the next session. Now, this session is going to end. Will recognition be given to Rajasthani language?

*[English]*

**SHRI R. VELU:** I cannot answer this question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Railway Minister cannot answer this question.

*[Translation]*

Your question has been recorded but not the answer because the Railway Minister cannot answer it.

**SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:** Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I want to ask the hon. Minister that applications for Recruitment in Railways, I am not talking about Mumbai or Maharashtra, should be invited from the local employment exchanges of each state. Why do you not apply this method? People of one State are getting priority in the absence of this method.

**MR. SPEAKER:** This question pertains to the medium of language.

**SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:** This is related to it. Regional language is important in examinations. Regional language will come automatically if applications are invited from the local exchanges.

*[English]*

**MR. SPEAKER:** Have you understood his question?

**SHRI R. VELU:** Yes, Sir. First of all, Railway Recruitment is not a State centric. It is All India. As I have mentioned earlier, one can write anywhere. ...*(Interruptions)* Let me answer. ....*(Interruptions)*

**MR. SPEAKER:** No clarificatory questions. Please do not record it. Now, I do not allow.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

**MR. SPEAKER:** Shri Mohan Rawale, you should be prepared to listen to the answer.

*...(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

**SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV:** Sir, I too have a supplementary question.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Ask one by one.

*[English]*

**SHRI R. VELU:** Sir, we cannot go and recruit by

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\*Not recorded.

drawing list from the Employment Exchanges because that will narrow down to a particular area, region or State. This is open to everyone in the country. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, the Railway Recruitment Board adopted the policy to have only two languages for recruitment of Group 'C' candidate. Prior to 1998, no qualification was required for recruitment of Group 'D'. Only in 1998, it was decided that the minimum qualification should be Eighth Class pass. Sir, this policy was adopted in 1998. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The Question is related to languages.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: I am coming to the question.

MR. SPEAKER: When?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, this is what the hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways has stated. As a number of regional languages have been developed and incorporated in the Eighth Schedule of our Constitution, I would like to know whether the Ministry of Railways or the Government of India will review it so that the candidates from various States will be allowed to appear in their own languages.

It is because, it will be on an all India basis. But uniform questionnaires can be prepared by the Ministry of Railways, and on that basis, examination can take place so that all the candidates belonging to various places speaking various languages can get equal opportunities.

MR. SPEAKER: He has said that.

SHRI R. VELU: Yes, I have already explained.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: You have not explained.

MR. SPEAKER: He cannot speak for every region. Please cooperate.

SHRI R. VELU: I have already said about the Group C. The hon. Member is the Chairman of the

Standing Committee on Railways and he is thorough and well aware with the subjects of the Railways.

MR. SPEAKER: That is the problem .

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: It is regarding the recruitment policy...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Railway Minister, look at me!

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI R. VELU: About the Group C, the hon. Member is apprehensive. There are about 20 RRBs in the country and they may be adopting different types of questions. His point of having uniform set of questionnaires is now being examined.

About the language part, as I mentioned, it can apply only for the lower category and not for the higher category.

*[Translation]*

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to know from the State Minister in the Ministry of Railways whether the question paper for the exam held in Kolkata last month by the Recruitment Board was printed only in one language i.e. in English due to which the examination has been cancelled there twice as the Railway Boards has a policy to take exams in two languages. Will you take action against the officials responsible for this? You said that the question paper was printed in two languages but it is not true. It was printed in one language only due to which the exam was cancelled there twice.

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: That must be against your policy .

SHRI R. VELU: If it is brought to my notice, I would definitely pursue action. Normally, we have two languages. We always have the Indian languages.

[English]

### **Introduction of Pilgrimage Trains**

\*609. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have any plan to introduce superfast pilgrimage trains with concessional fares;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways have any plans to construct Yatri Niwas accommodations for pilgrims at various places; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

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

### **Statement**

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) However, Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has a plan to set up 100 budget hotels for tourists including pilgrims, through public private partnership. Out of these, some locations are important from pilgrimage point of view.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Sir, in reply to part (a) of my Question 609—wherein I had asked whether the Railways have any plan to introduce superfast pilgrimage trains with concessional fares—the hon. Minister has mentioned by only saying "No". But here, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether is it a fact that the Sabarimala Pilgrimage Weekly Special between Mumbai and Ernakulam through Konkan Railways was introduced as it had been answered in reply to Unstarred Question No. 4409 dated 22nd December, 2005. I would like to know whether the same was introduced by the Indian Railways or by the Indian

Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC). Secondly, what control the Indian Railways is having over the IRCTC?

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, the IRCTC is an extended arm of the Railways. They are expected to have such special trains run, not only for Sabarimala but also for Vaishno Devi and for Buddhist circuits etc. His pointed question is whether the Sabarimala Pilgrimage Weekly Special is run by the IRCTC with concessions etc. Sir, the IRCTC has got its own plan of charging for the special trains. If it is run by the Ministry of Railways, it is as good as any other regular train and whatever concession facilities are there, they would be given. But if it is a special train, for tourism, for pilgrimage etc., to be run by the IRCTC or by a private operator, it is altogether be a different thing.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Sir, could the hon. Minister direct or advice the IRCTC to introduce special pilgrimage trains linking Somnath and Dwarka in the West and also with Jagannath Puri in the East, with Rameswaram in the South and with Hardwar in the North.

SHRI R. VELU: Sir, I share the concern of the hon. Member. I would definitely advise the IRCTC to see that such trains are introduced, to cover all these pilgrimage centres.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, for your cooperation.

No more supplementaries on this Question.

[Translation]

### **Information on First War of Independence**

\*610. PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state the scheme formulated by the Government to provide authentic information on the First War Independence in 1857 to the new generation of the country and inculcated the feeling of patriotism in them?

*[English]*

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

**Statement**

The following are some of the projects conceived to disseminate the information:

- (i) reprinting of the already published governments publications on the recommendation of a committee constituted by Ministry of HRD and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- (ii) Establishment of National Freedom Museum.
- (iii) A Mobile Exhibition on train to go around the country.

The participation of the people and the involvement of youth is an important ingredient of these events. Inaugural function has already been held on 11th May 2007 at Red Fort where youths from all parts of the country assembled. They marched from Meerut to Delhi symbolizing the march of sepoy from Meerut in 1857. State Government and Union Territories have also been advised to set up state level committees to chalk out programmes. These programmes will inculcate a feeling of patriotism by involving and sensitizing the people especially the younger generation with our struggle for freedom.

MR. SPEAKER: No time for supplementaries. Now, Question Hour is over.

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**WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS**

*[Translation]*

**Financial Grants to Voluntary Organisations**

\*606. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has decided to modify the system of distribution of financial grants being given to voluntary organisations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to constitute a monitoring committee to ensure optimum utilization of funds so that needy persons are benefited thereby; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has streamlined the procedure for sanction of grant in aid to the NGOs from the current financial year. As per the new procedure, the State Governments/UTs are required to send their consolidated recommendations to the Central Government after scrutinizing them in a State-level "Multi-Disciplinary Grant in Aid Committee." They are also required to submit their proposals duly recommended by the Grant in Aid Committee by 30th June, every year, within the notional allocation. While recommending the proposals, the State Governments are required to address the problem of regional imbalances for supporting the voluntary efforts in service deficient areas.

*[English]*

**Manufacture of Indigenous Tank 'Z' by HVF**

\*607. SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the progress in the manufacture of the indigenous tank 'Z' by the Heavy Vehicles Factory (HVF) is dismal as they could not so far produce 124 tanks indented by the Army Headquarters in March, 2000;

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

(c) the action proposed to be taken by the Government to revamp the performance of HVF in the production and supply of tank 'Z'?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) The 'Z' tank has passed through a developmental phase necessitated by technological changes. The tank has also been undergoing user trial evaluation and in the process certain aggregates underwent design modifications. Issue of tanks to Army will commence once the performance of the tanks is found satisfactory during extensive trials.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The infrastructure for production and supply of tanks has already been upgraded with an outlay of Rs. 100 crores.

[English]

#### **Supply of LNG to India**

\*611. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

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

(a) whether Iran is looking for a private Indian partner to sell liquefied natural gas, even when there is a Government-to-Government LNG deal, agreed to in 2005, for an annual supply of five million tonnes of LNG;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has received any firm proposal from Iran in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the impact of private partnership on Government-to-Government LNG deal?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) No, Sir. No formal communication has been received from Iran in this regard.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

#### **ONGC Projects under Social Responsibility Programmes**

\*612. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the projects undertaken by ONGC under social responsibility programmes during the last three years; and

(b) the funds allocated for the purpose and the achievements made thereunder?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) ONGC undertakes Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) projects in the following areas:

1. Disaster Relief
2. Water Management
3. Education
4. Healthcare
5. Entrepreneurship

The list of major projects undertaken in the last three years, funds allocated/expenditure incurred on these projects is enclosed as Statement.

#### **Statement**

##### **Major Projects undertaken by ONGC under social responsibility during last three years**

| Sl. No. | Project/Beneficiary Name | Funds allocated and Utilized  | Project/purpose Details   |
|---------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|---|
| 1       | 2                        | 3                             | 4   |
| 1.      | ONGC pura Trust          | Rs. 10 crores as Corpus Fund. | ONGC initiated its own PURA (Providing Urban Amenities in Rural Areas) Trust to provide gas |

| 1   | 2   | 3   | 4  |
|-----|---|---|--|
|     |   |   | from idle and isolated wells for power generation in rural areas. First PURA started in Tripura.   |
| 2.  | Project Saraswati                                   | Rs. 1.7 crores for the pilot project.   | Project to locate the deep aquifers left by the lost mythical river Saraswati in North-West Rajasthan and Haryana to overcome the water problems in these areas. |
| 3.  | Ramakrishna Mission Blind Boys Academy, Narendrapur | Rs. 60 lakhs  | Project to provide computer aided Braille machines for publication of Braille books for all the blind students of East and North Eastern India.                  |
| 4.  | Him Jyoti Foundation, Dehradun                      | Rs. 1.5 crores  | Support for a boarding school exclusively for under privileged girls of Uttarakhand.   |
| 5.  | The Energy Research Institute, Delhi                | Rs. 60 lakhs  | Support for development of centre for study of energy security and development in the middle east at TERI.   |
| 6.  | Akshay Patra Foundation, ISKCON, Mangalore          | Rs. 9 lakhs appx.   | Support for mid day meal for the under privileged children studying in schools in rural Mangalore.   |
| 7.  | Parents Support Group, Delhi                        | Rs. 12.5 lakhs  | Workshop on film making for differently abled children.  |
| 8.  | Mahila Polytechnic at Dehradun                      | Rs. 1 crore   | Support for a polytechnic exclusively for the women of Uttarakhand.  |
| 9.  | Prime Minister and Chief Minister Relief Funds      | PM relief fund—Rs. 15 cr + Rs. 2 cr + Rs. 1 cr. CM Relief fund—Rs. 1 cr. etc. | ONGC keeps contributing to these relief funds whenever disaster happens as disaster relief is one of our focus areas.  |
| 10. | Indian Red Cross Society, Guwahati                  | Rs. 27.5 lakhs  | Support for flood relief in Assam.   |
| 11. | Shankar Nethralaya, Chennai                         | Rs. 1.98 crore  | Towards the upgradation of the diagnostic services of the Genetic and Molecular Biology Diagnostic Department.   |
| 12. | Uttarakhand Forest Hospital, Haldwani               | Rs. 1 crore   | Support for development of multi-speciality hospital in remote Uttarakhand.  |
| 13. | Cancer Institute, Chennai                           | Rs. 1 crore   | For the upgradation of intensive care unit (ICU) at the institute.   |



| 1   | 2  | 3                 | 4  |
|-----|--|-------------------|--|
| 14. | Chintan, Delhi                             | Rs. 15 lakhs      | Support for installation of recycling plants for the benefit of the rag pickers.       |
| 15. | Bunkar Vikas Sansthan, Chanderi, MP        | Rs. 5 lakhs       | Support for the poor weavers of Chanderi, MP.  |
| 16. | Auroville Language Laboratory, Pondicherry | Rs. 12.5 lakhs    | Support for the development of Toimatis Language Laboratory.                           |
| 17. | Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, Delhi             | Rs. 5 lakhs appx. | Support for providing motorized tri-wheeler for the orthopaedically challenged people. |
| 18. | Community Halls project                    | Rs. 1 crore appx. | Support for development of community halls near Cauvery Asset of ONGC at Karaikal.     |
| 19. | Mobile Medical Unit                        | Rs. 15 lakhs      | For the rural population of Nellore and nearby areas.                                  |
| 20. | Bridge construction.                       | Rs. 40 lakhs      | Support for construction of bridge of Odalarevu, East Godawari Distt., Andhra Pradesh. |
| 21. | Footover bridge                            | Rs. 17.5 lakhs    | Over Arasalar river in Cauvery Asset, Karaikal after its destruction during Tsumani.   |
| 22. | Fishing Nets Project                       | Rs. 15 lakhs      | Support for providing fishing nets to the poor fishermen after Tsunami.                |

#### **Financial Assistance to Voluntary Organisations**

\*613. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government provide financial assistance to voluntary organizations engaged in the preservation and promotion of Eco tourism and Tribal culture in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of such organizations functioning in the country particularly in Andaman and Nicobar Islands at present and the amount of financial assistance provided to them during the last three years; and

(d) the performance of these organizations so far?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Tourism involves voluntary organizations in conceptualization and execution of projects under the scheme for development of Rural Tourism and also in capacity building and training programmes. However, funds are released to concerned State Governments/ Union Territories and their agencies who are responsible for implementation of the projects.

#### **Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway**

\*614. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have recently approved the signing and ratification of the Inter-governmental agreement on Trans-Asian Railway;

(b) if so, the details of the project; and

(c) the total investment involved and the share of Indian Railways therein?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Inter-governmental Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway was negotiated under the aegis of United Nations-Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP) and was opened for signature during the Ministerial Conference on Transport at Busan in November 2006. The Agreement defines and lists the railway lines of international importance including the missing links and lays down the guiding principles relating to technical characteristics for providing seamless transport on the Trans Asian Railway network. The Agreement does not estimate the total investment required on the network. However, the missing link in India is from Jiribam to Tamu in Myanmar. The construction of this missing link, as per the feasibility study conducted by Ministry of External Affairs through RITES Limited, is estimated to cost Rs. 2941 crores. On this portion, Ministry of Railways has sanctioned construction of the 97 kilometres new rail link between Jiribam and Tupul (short of Imphal) costing Rs. 727.56 crores.

[Translation]

#### **Deployment of Armed Forces Personnel to UN Peace Keeping Missions**

\*615. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has sent several teams of the Armed Forces personnel to assist UN Peace Keeping Missions to various countries in the recent years;

(b) if so, the number of Armed Forces personnel deputed for the purpose during each of the last three years;

(c) whether any amount is outstanding against the UNO for participation of Indian Armed Forces personnel in the UN Peace Keeping Missions;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken to expedite the recovery of outstanding dues from UNO?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) India has been an active participant in the United Nation's peacekeeping missions since 1950. The number of Armed Forces personnel deputed to various peacekeeping missions, in the last three years is as under:

| Year | No. of personnel |
|------|------------------|
| 2004 | 3579             |
| 2005 | 6854             |
| 2006 | 8922             |

As on March 2007, a sum of USD 228.99 millions (approx) is due from the UN towards reimbursements in respect of deployment on various missions. The deployment of troops and equipment and reimbursement of charges therefor is a continuous process which is followed up through the Permanent Mission of India at New York or by sending special teams from time to time.

[English]

#### **Carrying of Arms in Planes**

\*616. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether recently arms were found in the luggage of many passengers travelling by various planes;

(b) If so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to prevent the recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION ( SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Recently on four occasions arms were found in the luggage of passengers, the details of which are as under:—

1. On 13-01-2007, Customs Authority of Oubai detected and confiscated a Pistol and 30 rounds from the Registered Baggage of a passenger named Mr. Nusli Wadia, travelling from Mumbai to Dubai on Air India flight No. AI-717.

2. On 22-03-2007, a .32 Revolver was recovered from the hand baggage of Mr. S.M. Ashraf travelling in Varanasi bound Spicejet flight No. SG-603.

3. On 3-5-2007, one .32 revolver make-II loaded with 06 rounds was found in the hand baggage of Shri Anil Parmmar travelling in Jet Airways flight No. 9W-728 from Patna to Delhi.

4. On 3-5-2007, a 0.22 bore rifle was detected by Spicejet security staff while screening the courier bags of POBC Courier at Hyderabad airport.

Details of the action taken case-wise are as under:—

1. Air India conducted an enquiry. It was found that Mr. O.K. Balle, Security Agent of Air India had failed to detect the weapon during x-ray screening. The services of Mr. D.K. Balle have since been terminated.

2. Mr. S.M. Ashraf, was handed over to the Police Station, Palam Airport and a case was registered under the Arms Act.

3. The case was handed over to Airport Police Station, Patna for taking legal action under the Arms Act. Bihar Police is seized of the matter.

4. The courier representative was handed over to Begumpet Police Station by Spicejet Airline. Investigation by Hyderabad Police is going on.

(c) A series of dummy checks are conducted by Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) officers to ensure proficiency levels of Airlines screeners. Security arrangements are being monitored regularly. BCAS periodically carries out aviation security oversight audit, inspections, security surveys and tests as also random inspections to ensure security in aviation operations.

[Translation]

### **Payment of Compensation on Acquisition of Land by ONGC**

\*617: SHRI JIVABHAI A. PATEL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the norms laid down for payment of compensation to farmers by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation on account of acquisition of their lands;

(b) the amount of compensation paid to the farmers by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation on this account during each of the last two years, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government has received complaints regarding payment of compensation;

(d) if so, the details thereof during the above period; and

(e) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) ONGC acquires land on outright purchase or rental basis, as required, for carrying out its exploration and production activities. The land acquired on a temporary basis is restored to normal condition and returned to the farmer after the exploration work is over and the area/site is no longer required. However, once the hydrocarbon potential is established, the land is acquired on permanent basis. The amount of compensation is decided in accordance with the rates fixed by the Revenue Authorities of the State Governments concerned. Normally, payments of compensations are made within three months of acquisition through the State Authorities to the land owner.

The state-wise details of compensation paid during 2005-06 and 2006-07 on account of acquisition of land are as under:—

| Sl. No. | State(s)                     | 2005-06<br>Rs. in lakh | 2006-07<br>Rs. in lakh |
|---------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| 1.      | Assam                        | 273.08                 | 192.29                 |
| 2.      | Tripura                      | 102.43                 | 332.30                 |
| 3.      | Gujarat                      | 1743.74                | 2308.12                |
| 4.      | Andhra Pradesh               | 41.32                  | 42.28                  |
| 5.      | Tamil Nadu                   | 272.93                 | 342.00                 |
| 6.      | Himachal Pradesh             | 6.67                   | 0.0                    |
| 7.      | Uttar Pradesh/Madhya Pradesh | 0.0                    | 1.97                   |
| 8.      | Maharashtra                  | 0.0                    | 0.09                   |
| 9.      | West Bengal                  | 21.03                  | 0.0                    |
| 10.     | Jharkhand                    | 93.67                  | 58.13                  |
| 11.     | Rajasthan                    | 0.20                   | 280.48                 |

(c) to (e) ONGC has informed that no complaints regarding payment of compensation have been received. However, requests for enhancement of rate of compensation have been received. ONGC has revised the rates of compensation based on the recommendations of Revenue Departments of concerned states and compensation is being paid according to revised rates.

**SCs/STs on the Board of  
Directors of CPSUs**

\*618. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:

SHRI M. ANJAN KUMAR YADAV:

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

(a) whether no person belonging to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes is included in the Board of Directors of many Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) in the country; and

(b) if so, the names of such undertaking?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) The appointment to full time Board level posts in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) are made by the concerned Administrative Ministries/ Departments on the basis of recommendations of Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) and after obtaining the approval of competent authority.

The selection policy of the Government in the matter of appointment to Board level posts in CPSEs is laid down in the Government of India Resolution dated 3-3-1987. The policy of the Government is to appoint through a fair and objective selection procedure outstanding professional managers to Board level posts. In terms of the resolution, no reservation for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Backward Classes has been provided. Therefore, caste-wise and class-wise details of Board level incumbents of CPSEs are not maintained.

**Marketing on India Tourism**

\*619. SHRI V.K. THUMMAR:

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH  
DEO:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted any study to make marketing of India tourism effective in foreign countries;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Tourism had commissioned a study through the Gallup Organization in May 2006 to assess the impact of overseas marketing activities and make recommendations for making future marketing efforts in overseas markets more effective. The study has established that the Incredible India campaign has been able to create interest in India as a destination with around 44% of the potential travelers stating that the advertisements made them somewhat or more likely to visit India in the next two years. The study recommends that India needs to allocate sufficient budget and strengthen presence of its tourism offices in overseas markets.

(c) The Ministry of Tourism prepares Annual Action plans for the marketing activities of all its overseas offices after taking into account the feedback received from the field offices, trade partners, travel magazines and market surveys/studies, etc.

*[English]***Modernization of Petrol/Diesel Outlets**

\*620. SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria laid down for modernization of petrol/diesel retail outlets;

(b) whether the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) spend huge sums on the modernization of their retail petrol/diesel outlets;

(c) if so, the amount spent by each OMC during the last three years, year-wise; and

(d) the funds earmarked for the purpose during the current year, company-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) to (c) The Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) namely Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) make investments on modernization of their Retail Outlets (ROs) to improve appearance and to provide appropriate facilities/convenience to the customers with a view to effectively facing competition in the deregulated scenario and enhancing the customer loyalty through enhanced services. The criteria for selection of ROs for modernization are primarily based on location, current sales and the future potential, The total amount spent on modernization, companywise for the last three years is as under:—

(Rupees in Crore)

| Year    | IOC<br>(including<br>IBP) | BPCL | HPCL |
|---------|---------------------------|------|------|
| 2004-05 | 308                       | 201  | 202  |
| 2005-06 | 323                       | 209  | 223  |
| 2006-07 | 351                       | 214  | 167  |

(d) The funds earmarked by the OMCs for modernization, company-wise during the current year are as under:

(Rupees in crore)

| Name of Company     | 2007-08 |
|---------------------|---------|
| IOC (Including IBP) | 763     |
| BPCL                | 221     |
| HPCL                | 105     |

**Plan for Disabled Persons**

\*621. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has drawn out a Rs. 1800 crore plan for bettering the prospects of the physically and mentally impaired and disabled persons in order to provide them employment and self employment opportunities; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the mode of implementation of the same?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MEIRA KUMAR): (a) and (b) The Government has decided to provide incentives to employers in the organized sector, to promote regular employment to the physically handicapped persons. Employer's contribution of Employees Provident Fund (EPF) and the Employees State Insurance (ESI) will be reimbursed for the first three years for the purpose.

[Translation]

**Installation of MSSR**

5741. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the names of airports where modern air traffic system has been installed during the last three years and the details of expenditure incurred by the Government in this regard;

(b) the details of benefits achieved by the aviation service as a result thereof;

(c) the names of airports which have been made capable of charter flights during the said period;

(d) the places where Monopulse Secondary Surveillance Radars (MSSR) have been installed/proposed to be installed in the country; and

(e) the details of cost incurred on these radars alongwith the details of advantages of installing MSSR Radars?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The following CNS projects have been completed during the last three years, i.e. 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07.

2004-05—UHF LINK 30 Nos.; VEES Chennai and Kolkata; LCD Monitor 19 Nos. Delhi, Chennai; CCTV Imphal, Guwahati, Agartala and Bagdogra: Upgradation of ECATCS system software Chennai; Walkie-Talkie 472 Nos. and 84 Base stations and AFIS 1 No.

2005-06—Upgradation of Kolkata Airport MIDAS-IV RVR to CAT-II; VCCS Delhi, Guwahati, Ahmedabad, Allahabad and Hyderabad: UHF Link 10 No.; Radomes Top for DVOR 8 Nos.; CCTV Bhopal and Ranchi; ASMGCS Delhi; GPS Rx. 5 Nos.—Delhi, Chennai, Mumbai, Kolkata and Guwahati; Portable ILS receiver; EPABX 22 Nos.—various airports.

2006-07—High Altitude Aircraft 1 No.—For flight calibration (FIU Delhi); RCAG-Ooty, Trivendrum and Chennai; DATIS 11 Nos.—Jaipur, Guwahati, Kolkata, Ahmedabad, Calicut, Chennai, Cochin, Hyderabad, Trivendrum, Mumbai and Patna; Headsets 417 Nos.—Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai etc.; VECS—Varanasi, Nagpur, Mumbai; DVOR—IGI Delhi; HP DME—IGI Delhi and ILS—Dimapur.

The expenditure incurred (Rupee in crore) during the last three years are 2004-05 (Rs. 86.91), 2005-06 (Rs. 118.2) and 2006-07 (Rs. 66.15) respectively.

(b) Upgradation of CNS Infrastructure has enabled smooth, safe and efficient handling of aircrafts in airspace and at airports.

(c) All operational airports of AAI are capable of handling charter flights.

(d) Monopulse Secondary Surveillance Radars (MSSR) have been installed at Delhi, Varanasi, Kolkata, Bchrapur, Guwahati, Chennai, Hyderabad, Mangalore, Trivendrum, Ahmedabad, Nagpur and Mumbai. It is also proposed to install MSSRs at seven other airports.

(e) The likely expenditure on provision of proposed 7 number MSSRs is Rs. 113 crores. Introduction of above mentioned 7 additional MSSRs will facilitate seamless surveillance over Indian Terrestrial Airspace by filling the radar coverage gaps for smooth and efficient Air Traffic flow.

#### **Permission to Private Airport/Aircraft**

5742. SHRI CHANDRABHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the existing rules under which the sale and purchase of aircraft by private parties are permitted;

(b) whether the private parties have the right to construct their own airports for using their aircraft;

(c) if not, whether they are permitted by the Government to use Government/Public airports;

(d) if so, the rules under which permission is granted alongwith usage charges for the airports;

(e) whether the citizen of India are permitted to own and use private aircraft; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The requirements to import of aircraft are laid down in Ministry of Commerce (DGFT) public notice no 274(PN)/92-97 dated 23-02-1995. Further the Director General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has notified Civil Aviation Requirements (CAR) under Sub-Rule 3 of 134 of Aircraft Rules, 1937 for obtaining the approval of Government for import/purchase/lease of aircraft.

(b) Private airport can be constructed subject to Government approval and safety/security oversight.

(c) and (d) Government/Public aerodrome may be used by private aircraft in accordance with rule 85 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937 on the terms and conditions specified. For use of airport, Landing Charges and Parking Charges, X-Ray Baggage Charges are payable to the airport operator. In addition, Route Navigation Facility Charges (RNFC) and Terminal Navigation Facility Charges (TNFC) are payable to Airports Authority of India.

(e) and (f) Yes sir. In accordance with the rule 30 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937, an aircraft can be registered in the name of Indian citizens and can be flown in accordance with rule 15 of the Aircraft Rules, 1937, provide it is airworthy.

#### **Beautification of Airports**

5743. CH. MUNAWAR HASSAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the work undertaken by various agencies for beautification of the offices of the Airports Authority of India in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi during each of the last two years;

(b) the expenditure incurred thereon during the above period;

(c) whether there is any authority to check the quality and performance of the work undertaken by these agencies;

(d) If so, the details thereof;

(e) whether any irregularities have been noticed while performing the work of beautification in any of the places; and

(f) If so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION ( SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No separate expenditure has been incurred on beautification of the offices of the Airports Authority of India located at

airports in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi. However, all the existing services including horticulture features have been maintained.

(b) to (f) Do not arise.

[English]

#### **Directions to PSUs**

5744. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the directions issued by the Government to the managements of the enterprises in Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) during the last five years;

(b) the number of the directions out of them are generally applicable to all PSUs and those specific ones for particular PSUs, PSU-wise;

(c) whether any review of such directions has been carried out from time to time especially with a view to distinguish those directions which tend to impinge autonomy of the management with other;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) Department of Public Enterprises being nodal Department for CPSEs have issued guidelines from time to time. The details of guidelines issued year wise during last five years are give as under:—

| Year    | No. of Guidelines |
|---------|-------------------|
| 2002-03 | 16                |
| 2003-04 | 15                |
| 2004-05 | 22                |

| Year    | No. of Guidelines |
|---------|-------------------|
| 2005-06 | 33                |
| 2006-07 | 15                |

(c) to (e) In order to give more autonomy to CPSEs, Government set up a Committee in 1997 to review the guidelines issued by BPE/DPE. On the basis of the recommendations of the Committee, 696 guidelines were deleted and 196 guidelines were retained. The retained guidelines and guidelines issued subsequently were further reviewed in 2000 by another Committee. On the basis of the recommendations of the said Committee, 66 guidelines have been deleted, 11 guidelines have been removed from DPE Compendium in September, 2002 and 52 guidelines have been merged/modified.

#### **Financial Assistance to SCs/STs for Medical Treatment by Dr. Ambedkar Foundation**

5745. SHRI M. SHIVANNA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Dr. Ambedkar Foundation has been providing financial assistance to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, those who are suffering from major diseases like cancer, kidney to get treatment from recognized hospital;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether not even a single hospital/diagnostic centre has been adopted from Kamataka to provide medical treatment under this foundation;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether there is any proposal to select any hospital from Kamataka under the Ambedkar foundation to provide free medical facilities to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes; and

(f) 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. Foundation is providing financial assistance under the Dr. Ambedkar Medical Aid scheme to the Scheduled Caste Patients, whose annual income is less than 50,000 and who are suffering from major ailments that need surgery, such as Heart, Kidney, Liver, Cancer, Brain etc. or any other life threatening diseases. Fifty per cent of the total cost of the treatment will be reimbursed to the hospital concerned directly with maximum ceiling limited to Rs. 75,000 in each case, out of which Rs. 25,000 will be reimbursed before surgery and the remaining amount after the surgery.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Scheme is presently implemented in 10 States through 10 hospitals identified under the scheme.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) It has been proposed to include K.S. Bowring Hospital, Bangalore, Kidwai Institute of Oncology, Bangalore, Kasturba Hospital, Manipal and Civil Hospital, Oorgaon.

*[Translation]*

#### **Passenger Amenities in Railways**

5746. DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the details of railway passenger amenities announced in the Railway Budget 2007-08 and the remaining amenities announced in the previous year alongwith the proposed action plan calendar to start each of these amenities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): During the current financial year i.e. 2007-08, as many as 300 stations have been identified for the purpose of modernization and giving a face lift. In the previous year i.e. 2006-07, 334 stations were selected for modernization out of which works have been completed at 236 stations. The remaining stations are targeted for completion by March 2008.

*[English]*

#### **Peace-Talks with ULFA**

5747. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether he had peace-talks with the representatives of the United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) across the table in April this year;

(b) if so, the specific issues discussed and outcome thereof;

(c) the issues and points on which the talks broke down;

(d) whether options have been kept open on certain conditions in case the ULFA gave up their intransigence; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) No such talks have taken place in April 2007. The Government is, however, open to talks with any militant group provided they shun violence.

#### **Training to Ground Handling Staff**

5748. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the staff involved in ground handling operations at Airports, including vehicle drivers, have not undergone flight safety training;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Under the Airports Authority of India Management Airport Regulations, 2003 all drivers of vehicles are required to have specific authorisation from Airport Incharges after passing test or examination as may be prescribed by the Competent Authority to maintain flight safety.

[Translation]

**Allotment of Petrol Pumps to  
Dependents of Martyrs**

5749. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:

SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA:

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

(a) whether the Government is aware that oil company officers act arbitrarily in allotting retail outlets and gas agencies to dependents of martyrs;

(b) if so, whether the Government proposes to conduct a high level inquiry to know the actual position of quota of retail outlets and gas agencies allotted to dependents of martyrs; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) The dependents of the persons who are killed in various military operations are eligible for allotment of Retail Outlet dealerships under Defence/PMP Category. The selection/allotment is done as per the extant Dealer Selection guidelines for Retail Outlet dealerships. In addition, this Ministry had announced in the year 1999 a scheme called 'Operation Vijay' Special Scheme (Kargil) for allotment of dealerships/distributorships to the wife/next of kin of martyrs who had laid down their lives in Kargil war in defence of the Nation. The allotment under this Scheme was done by this Ministry on the recommendation of Director General Resettlement (DGR).

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

[English]

**Air Services between Shimla-Kullu**

5750. DR. COL. (RETD.) DHANI RAM SHANDIL:  
Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the operation of air services to Shimla-

Kullu has been stopped by Vayudoot, Indian and other private airlines;

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

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to restart the air services for the said route?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Indian has discontinued operations to Shimla-Kullu. Indian Airlines had a fleet of three Dornier-228 aircraft, and used to operate a DO 228 aircraft to/from Shimla and Kullu. Due to the grounding of one DO 228, the services to Shimla and Kullu were withdrawn w.e.f. 23th September, 2002. The remaining two aircraft are positioned at Cochin, in order to maintain a vital air link between Lakshadweep Island and mainland India. However, Jagson Airlines and Air Deccan are providing services on this sector.

(c) Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country. It is, however, up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government.

**Monuments in Karnataka**

5751 SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government decided to set up the National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities at a time when the ASI, Dharwad Circle, Karnataka which has been looking after protection and conservation of 391 Centrally protection monuments in 11 Districts of North Karnataka has been struggling to cope with the increasing workload; and

(b) if so, to what extent the assistance has been provided/proposed to be provided to the ASI, Dharwad Circle, Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Government has set up a National Mission on Monuments and Antiquities which was formally launched in March 2007.

The Dharwad Circle of the Archaeological Survey of India conserves and protects 391 centrally protected monuments in Karnataka and is equipped with required number of personnel for carrying out the conservation, preservation works of the above monuments.

The allocation of funds and expenditure incurred by the circle during the last three years are as under:

(Rs. in lakhs)

| Year    | Allotment | Expenditure |
|---------|-----------|-------------|
| 2004-05 | 491       | 495         |
| 2005-06 | 749       | 749         |
| 2006-07 | 641       | 641         |

#### **Setting Up of Refineries Abroad**

5752. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether major oil companies have set up refineries in various countries abroad;

(b) if so, the details of refineries set up during the last three years alongwith proposal for the next three years and the investment made/to be made on each of them; and

(c) the total output proposed to be realised from those refineries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) No, Sir. In response to a request received from the Government of Edo State Nigeria in January, 2004, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) had indicated its willingness to set up grassroots refinery in

Edo State, in collaboration with the State Government. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between Edo State Government and IOC on 10th September, 2004 for collaboration for development of a petroleum refinery in Edo State. IOC had sought from Government of Edo State, allotment of oil blocks in Nigeria, against its involvement in the proposed refinery.

IOC had executed a MoU with Calik Enerji, a Turkish Company, in November, 2005 for cooperation in various activities in hydrocarbon sector in Turkey or in any other third country. The MoU also envisaged setting up of a grassroots refinery in Ceyhan, Turkey. IOC had submitted an application to the Energy Market Regulatory Authority (EMRA) of Turkey in August, 2006 for grant of license for setting up 15 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA) integrated grassroots refinery cum petrochemical complex at Ceyhan. IOC and Calik will jointly commission separate consultants for preparing Detailed Feasibility Report (DFR), after receiving the provisional license from EMRA. On the basis of DFR, if the project is found techno-economically viable, the integrated project would be set up by the Joint Venture Company to be co-promoted by IOC and Calik Enerji.

[Translation]

#### **Caution Orders for Drivers**

5753. SHRI RAKESH SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether train drivers were given caution order in view of ongoing maintenance work in Western-Central Railway Zone and caution orders/caution boards have not been removed even after the completion of work, due to which train speeds are unnecessarily kept slow and trains reach their destination late; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to check the irregularities by the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Caution orders/Caution Boards are removed soon after the completion of work and all restriction are monitored carefully to ensure trains run on time.

(b) Does not arise.

[English]

**Direct Link between Chennai  
Egmore and Chennai Central**

5754. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the long pending demand for a direct link between Chennai Egmore and Chennai Central; and

(b) if so, the action taken by the Railways thereon and the time by which the direct link is likely to be provided?

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

(b) The estimate for this project was sanctioned in 2003. The technical feasibility and commercial viability study of this project was entrusted to M/s. RITES. Out of the various alternatives suggested, the proposal which envisages overhead crossing of the railway track over the Poonamalli High road between Chennai Central and Moore Market complex is technically feasible. The same was referred to Government of Tamil Nadu for clearance. A reply from the Government of Tamil Nadu is awaited.

[Translation]

**Central Assistance under Pre/Post Matric  
Scholarship Scheme to OBCs**

5755. SHRI KAILASH JOSHI:

SHRI RAKESH SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Union Government has received any proposal from Madhya Pradesh and other States for providing necessary funds for the cent per cent payment of pre-matric and post-matric and scholarships to the other backward classes students on the lines of students belonging to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

**Model Villages**

5756. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of backward villages in the country designated to be developed as model villages by Oil and Natural Gas Commission, State-wise; and

(b) The names of the places where work has been started in this regard, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) ONGC has not designated any village to be developed as a model village.

**Arjun Tank**

5757. SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Defence Research and Development Organisation proposes to seek foreign technology assistance in order to remove deficiencies in the Arjun Tank;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the Arjun Tank is likely to be inducted in the Indian Army?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. At present there is no such proposal to seek foreign technology assistance in this regard. Issues related to production of Arjun Tank are being resolved.

(c) Indian Army has placed an indent of manufacturing of 124 Tanks on Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) in March 2000. Five tanks have been handed over to Indian Army. Nine more tanks are under Joint Receipt Inspection.

[Translation]

#### **Sale of Land for Modernisation of Airports**

5758. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of airports and the land available with them at present;

(b) whether the Government proposes to sell the land of airports to the builders for the modernisation;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the land in Delhi and Mumbai is proposed to be sold; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The land (in acres) available in each domestic airports are Agartala-467, Kailashahar-63, Kamalpur-91, Khowai-90 in Tripura; Agatti-46 in Lakshadweep Islands; Agra-14.8, Allahabad-0.7, Chakeri-5.02, Gorakpur-1, Jhansi-197.77, Kanpur-209, Lalitpur-138, Lucknow-1592, Varanasi-583 in Uttar Pradesh; Ahmedabad-931, Bhavnagar-295, Bhuj-42.16, Deesa (Palanpur)-77, Jamnagar-35.8, Kandla-355, Keshod (Junagarh)-385, Porbandar-302, Rajkot-250, Vadodara-828 in Gujarat; Akola-196, Aurangabad-518, Hadapsar-50, Juhu-384.5, Kolhapur-183, Nagpur (Sonegaon)-1564, Pune-14, Sholapur-365 in Maharashtra; Along-1, Daparizo-I, Passighat-66, Tezu-3, Zero-3 in Arunachal Pradesh; Amritsar-1026, Chandigarh-6, Ludhiana-125, Pathankot -80 in Punjab; Asansol-508, Bagdogra-23, Balurghat-87, Behala-222, Cooch Behar-155, Malda-140 in West Bengal; Bangalore-19.3, Belgaum-440, Hassan-145, Hubli-325, Mangalore-151, Mysore-292 in Karnataka; Bhopal-613, Gwalior-30, Indore-575, Jabalpur-333, Khajuraho-378, Khandwa-41, Panna-106, Satna-452 in Madhya Pradesh;

Bhubaneswar-935, Jharsuguda-652.6 in Orissa; Bikaner (Nal)-20, Jaipur-699.6, Jaiselmer-16.53, Jodhpur-10.9, Kota-530, Udaipur-328 in Rajasthan; Bilaspur-352, Raipur-544 in Chattisgarh; Calicut-440 in Kerala; Chakulia-353, Gaya-861, Jogbani-153, Muzzafarpur-102, Patna-254, Raxaul-211 in Bihar; Coimbatore-553, Madurai-442, Salem-136, Trichy-656, Tuticorin-180, Vellore-51.5 in Tamil Nadu; Cuddapah-533, Donakonda-137, Hyderabad-790, Nadirgul-261, Rajamundry-366, Tirupati-293, Vijaywada-671, Visakhapatnam-252, Warrangal-775 in Andhra Pradesh; Dehradun-89, Pantnagar-129 in Uttaranchal; Dibrugarh-354, Guwahati-634, Jorhat-10.76, Silchar (Kumbhigram)-37, Tezpur-42, North Lakhimpur-218, Rupsi-448 in Assam; Dimapur-252 in Nagaland; Goa-20.65 in Goa; Imphal-505 in Manipur; Jammu-90.74, Leh-20, Srinagar-53, Kangra (Gagged)-14, Kullu-(Bhuntar)-69, Shimla-141 in Himachal Pradesh; Lengpui (Aizwal)-380, Tura-35 in Mizoram; Pondicherry-115, Port Blair-45 in Union Territory; Safdarjung-253 in Delhi and Ranchi-526 in Jharkhand respectively. The land (in acres) available in each international airports are Kolkata-1651.85 in West Bengal; Delhi-5106.43 in Delhi; Chennai-1151.72 in Tamil Nadu Thiruvananthapuram-592.36 in Kerala and Mumbai-1875 in Maharashtra respectively.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

#### **Unauthorized Constructions and Encroachments on Kanpur Cantonment's Lands**

5759. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether unauthorized constructions and encroachments are going on in the Kanpur Cantonment's lands;

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

(c) the reasons for not taking any action for removing the unauthorized constructions and encroachments; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) In the recent past, six unauthorized constructions in the Harrisganj locality of Kanpur Cantonment were reported. Statutory provisions already exist for taking action against encroachments/unauthorized construction. Accordingly the Cantonment Board has taken action under the Cantonments Act against the unauthorized constructions.

[Translation]

#### **Drug Addiction Test**

5760. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Government is considering making the drug addiction test compulsory for all the students before their admission in colleges and professional colleges;

(b) if so, whether only the students with negative report will be admitted; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which this measure is likely to be implemented?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

#### **Launching of 'Operation Khoj' by IAF**

5761. SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:

SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Air Force has launched 'Operation Khoj' recently as reported in the 'Hindustan Times' dated April 26, 2007;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the other steps taken by the Government to attract youth in the defence services?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) 'Operation Khoj' is an interactive game hoisted on the web page of the IAF, since June 2001. It is an interesting treasure hunt game to educate the young online visitors about the challenging life in the Indian Air Force. It was also to showcase a professionally managed, motivated and challenging organization to the youth and to attract them to opt for a career in the IAF. The effort is also to counter the economically aggressive private companies/MNCs which were weaning away the best talent towards them.

(c) The Armed Forces have undertaken sustained image projection and publicity campaign to create 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 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, motivation lectures in school, colleges are also some of the other measures in this direction.

#### **Delay In Acquisition of Low Level Radars**

5762. SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been delay in the acquisition of low level radars to detect low flying enemy aircraft;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the fund utilization for upgradation of combat fleet and radar surveillance systems has been low;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) Induction of new radars, including low level radars, is a continuous process based on the requirement of the Air Force. Government has accorded approval for the acquisition of low level radars and the process of acquisition is at various stages of finalization.

(c) to (e) Funds are available for upgradation of the combat fleet and radar surveillance systems. Their utilization takes place as and when the upgradation schemes fructify on signing of the contracts.

#### **Training to Afghan Army by Indian Army Officers**

5763. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India will soon send at least a dozen Army Officers to war-ravaged Afghanistan to teach basic military fieldcraft and English skills to the fledgling Afghan Army as reported in the 'Times of India' dated April 26, 2007;

(b) if so, whether the Government has given its approval;

(c) if so, the time by which the Army Officers are expected to be sent;

(d) whether all possible security arrangement alongwith the compensation will be provided to these officers in case of any mis-happening there;

(e) if so, whether any MoU has been signed between the two countries; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY) : (a) There is no proposal to send Indian Army Officers to Afghanistan for training the Afghan Army.

(b) to (f) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

#### **ONGC-BG Joint Venture**

5764. SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether British Gas and ONGC joint venture for developing the 3K-G Basin blocks have been dropped by the Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether arbitrary denial for JV will lower the image of Indian Government among Global investors; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken to restore the JV between BG and ONGC which has been conducted through a transparent bidding process?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) The Government has not approved the proposal of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) for alliance with British Gas Exploration and Production India Limited (BGEPIIL) for exploration and development of three deep water blocks in the Krishna Godavari basin. The farm-in strategic alliance proposal in respect of BGEPIIL was not adequately responsive in comparison to terms being offered during the open bidding process under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Therefore, Government decided that it would not be appropriate to accept the proposal at such a stage when our NELP process has achieved good credibility and support worldwide based on a transparent open bid system and speedy decision making process. The above blocks could be offered in the upcoming rounds of NELP as and when their exploration tenures come to an end. The Government has consistently been following a fully transparent and open methodology for awarding exploration blocks under NELP, and this has enhanced the image of Government among global investors.

#### **Deep Water Exploration Blocks**

5765. SHRI SURENDRA PRAKASH GOYAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether British Gas (BG) was shortlisted to develop three deep water exploration blocks in Krishna-Godavari Basin jointly with ONGC;

(b) if so, the complete details in this regard:

(c) whether the Government has decided to re-offer these blocks under the next New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) round denying BG the opportunity to develop these blocks with ONGC; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) The Government has not approved the proposal of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) for alliance with British Gas Exploration and Production India Limited (BGEPI) for exploration and development of three deep water blocks in the Krishna Godavari basin. The farm-in strategic alliance proposal in respect of BGEPI was not adequately responsive in comparison to terms being offered during the open bidding process under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Therefore, Government decided that it would not be appropriate to accept the proposal at such a stage when our NELP process has achieved good credibility and support worldwide based on a transparent open bid system and speedy decision making process. The above blocks could be offered in the upcoming rounds of NELP as and when their exploration tenures come to an end. The Government has consistently been following a fully transparent and open methodology for awarding exploration blocks under NELP, and this has enhanced the image of Government among global investors.

#### **Dances in NER**

5766. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the promotional programmes being taken up by the Ministry for the promotion of various folk and classical dances and art forms in the North East Region;

(b) whether a proposal for supporting a sattriya

dance and training centre at Delhi is under consideration of the Ministry; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Sangeet Natak Akademi under its various schemes provides support to performing art traditions of North Eastern regions. These include:—

- (1) Financial Assistance to cultural institutions under Akademi's grant's scheme.
- (2) Project based grants to individuals for research oriented projects.
- (3) Financial assistance for publications.
- (4) Documentation of performing art of the region.
- (5) Festivals of young artists of Music, Dance and Theatre.
- (6) Theme based festivals, seminars and workshops of regional traditions.
- (7) Presentation of performing arts of North East in other States through Inter State Cultural Exchange Programme.
- (8) Akademi Awards and Yuva Puraskar to artists of the region.
- (9) Assistance and support to Puppetry through grants and sponsorship etc.
- (10) Jawaharlal Nehru Manipur Dance Academy, Imphal, is engaged in training and promotion of Manipuri dance and music traditions. Annual Festival of Sattriya dance is held in Guwahati.
- (11) A number of training programmes on Sattriya traditions are supported and Sattriya artists are sponsored in different parts of the country,
- (12) National Festival of North East traditions called OCTAVE has been held in Delhi in 2006 and in Hyderabad in 2007.



The North East Zone Cultural Centre (NEZCC), Dimapur also promotes the folk traditions of the North East under following schemes:

- (1) National Cultural Exchange Programme (NCEP)
- (2) Guru Shishya Parampara
- (3) Documentation of vanishing Arts Forms
- (4) Young Talent Artists Scheme
- (5) Theatre Rejuvenation
- (6) Shilpgram activities

The North East Zone Cultural Centre, Dimapur also participated actively in the "Octave" Festivals of 2006 and 2007.

(b) to (c) A proposal in this regard has been received in Sangeet Natak Akademi from Assam Association, Delhi. If the Training Centre for Sattriya Dance in Delhi is set up by the Assam Association, the Sangeet Natak Akademi will provide support under its scheme and norms.

#### **Security Armour at IGI Airport**

5767. SHRJ JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether cameramen of Star News channel managed to get a job and security pass for IGIA cargo terminal after paying a bribe of Rs. 1 lakh only exposed the chink in the IGIA's security armour;

(b) if so, the modus operandi adopted for the purpose;

(c) whether any action has been taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the other steps taken/proposed to be taken so that such incidents do not occur in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Processing and access control of the city side area of airport which includes cargo complex is the responsibility of the airport operator.

In this case a temporary loader was recruited by the handling agency M/s. Airogo Travel and Cargo Pvt. Ltd. to whom Delhi International Airport Pvt. Ltd. (DIAL) has awarded the contract of handling cargo in export cargo division. The temporary Entry Pass for Cargo compound was issued to Temporary Loader, Shri Vikas Pandey, the alleged cameraman of Star News after following due process including checking of Police verification.

(b) The recruitment of the above mentioned individual was carried out by M/s. Airogo Travel and Cargo Pvt. Ltd., the contractor of the DIAL and the temporary entry pass was issued by following due process. The entry pass was specifically meant only for bonded area and in no case could the said person go to the security sensitive airside. At the time of his recruitment as a Loader, the person concerned had given required information in the Bio-data and furnished the copies of his Voter I.D. Card, Photographs, and police verification report besides intermediate marks sheet.

(c) and (d) Based upon a complaint from DIAL, a case in Crime No. 205/07 has been registered on 7-5-2007 by the Delhi Police at Police Station, IGIA, Terminal-II, New Delhi.

(e) The existing measures for scrutiny and issuance of entry passes have further been intensified to avoid recurrence of such incidents.

#### **Airlines Holding Category III-A**

5768. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Aircraft with auto land system which allow aeroplanes to land in poor visibility with far greater accuracy and reliability are bunched together with those which do not have such sophisticated avionics;

(b) if so, whether the Director General of Civil Aviation has been giving permission to category III-A to land even during poor visibility should be given preference to touch down first; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No, Sir. All aircrafts are cleared to approach the airport but only those aircrafts whose aerodrome operating minima are lower than current visibility/runway visual range, carry out instrument approach to land.

(b) and (c) All aircrafts which are able to operate in a particular visibility are cleared to make approaches in their sequence. Aircrafts whose minima is higher than the prevailing visibility are not permitted to land or take off except during emergency.

#### **Monitoring of Civilian Aircraft**

5769. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether all civilian aircraft operated within the airspace of India will now be monitored by the IAF radars; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The Indian Air Force (IAF) has implemented additional Air Defence Identification Zones to monitor the air traffic operating through Indian Airspace.

(b) Details are being collected.

#### **Vizag Airport**

5770. SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the airport at Vizag was closed in January, 2007;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to overcome the inconvenience caused to passengers as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, between 18th to 30th January, 2007, a number of flights were either diverted or cancelled due to low visibility.

(c) Construction of a new runway 10/28 of 10,000 ft. length at Vizag airport has been completed. Installation of Flight calibration of ILS and VOR equipments are nearing completion. Trial procedures for ILS and VOR instruments approaches have already been developed. The above said steps will ensure non re-occurrence of such inconvenience to the passengers.

#### **Installation of ETD at Airports**

5771. SHRI VIJOY KRISHNA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India proposes to install 200 explosive trace detectors (ETD) at all the airports of the country within the next six months; and

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the estimated costs of their installations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Airports Authority of India (AAI) shall provide Explosive Trace Detectors (ETDs) at all the operating airports. The ETDs will be capable of detecting explosives and narcotics materials. The cost of the 200 ETDs is about Rs. 91 crores including the Customs Duty.

*[Translation]*

#### **Freight Corridor Project**

5772. SHR MOHAN RAWALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the money required for the scheme regarding "Freight Corridor" is proposed to be recovered from passengers;

(b) if so, the target of income likely to be accrued therefrom every year;

(c) the comprehensive details of Western Freight Corridor project; and

(d) the time by which these corridors are likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Ministry of Railways have decided that existing safety surcharge now stands subsumed in passenger fares in form of a development charge for partial funding of Dedicated Freight Corridor project. It is expected that Rs. 845 crore per annum would accrue in form of development charge. No additional levy has been imposed to fund Dedicated Freight Corridor project.

(c) and (d) Western Dedicated Freight Corridor will start from Jawaharlal Nehru Port and will be routed via Vadodra-Ahmedabad-Palanpur-Rewari to Tughlakabad/Dadri. As per the present estimate, the project costing Rs.16,592 crore will be completed in about 5 years after the start of construction of the project.

[English]

#### **Cess on Petrol and Diesel**

5773. PROF. CHANDER KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total revenue generated by imposing cess on Diesel and Petrol as on date; and

(b) the details of the expenditure on developmental works out of the revenue generated from this cess, State-wise and year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Ministry of Finance have informed that Revised Estimates (RE) for 2006-07 and actual collection during (Apr.-Nov.) 2006 (provisional) in respect to total cess on Diesel and Petrol are as under:

(Rs. in crore)

| Head   | RE 2006-07 | Actual collection (provisional) (Apr.-Nov.) 2006 |
|--------|------------|--|
| Diesel | 10140      | 6246   |
| Petrol | 2760       | 1679   |
| Total  | 12900      | 7925   |

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

#### **Joint Venture between India and South Korea**

5774. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether South Korea has proposed a joint venture with India for production of military equipments;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the terms of the joint venture agreement; and

(c) the nature of the military equipment contemplated to be produced under the joint venture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAOINDERJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

#### **Declaration of Ahmednagar Fort-Chand Bibi Quila as Monument**

5775. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Ahmednagar Fort-Chand Bibi Quila was converted to a jail during 1942-45 where eminent freedom fighters were interned;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government proposes to declare it as a monument of historical importance; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. This fort was converted into a Jail during the freedom struggle (1942-45) where eminent freedom fighters were interned. Some of the prominent national leaders imprisoned at this fort were: Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (from 10 August 1942 to 28 March 1945); Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad (from 10 August 1942 to 17 April 1945); Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (from 10 August 1942 to 18 April 1945); Pandit Govind Vallabh Pant (from 10 August 1942 to 28 March 1945); Pandit Herekrishna Mehab (from 10 August 1942 to 29 March 1945); Acharya J.B. Kripalani (from 10 August 1942 to 27 March 1945); Acharya Narendra Dev (from 10 August 1942 to 28 March 1945); Dr. Syed Mahmud (from 10 Aug. 1942 to 6 October 1944); Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya (from 10 August 1942 to 5 April 1945); Mr. Saf Ali (from 10 August 1942 to 3 April 1945); Dr. P.C. Ghosh (from 10 August 1942 to 20 May 1944); Shri Shankar Rao Dev (from 10 August 1942 to 18 April 1945).

(c) and (d) The fort is at present under the control and possession of the Ministry of Defence. There is no proposal, at present, with the Government for declaring the Fort as monument of national importance.

[Translation]

#### **Catering System in Railways**

5776. SHRI BHUVANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the two-tier catering system is in vogue in the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of proposed action plan of the Railways to rehabilitate surplus helpers consequent upon regularisation of vendors of Khadagpur and Tatanagar departmental catering service in other departments;

(d) the reasons for non-conducting of annual

medical examination of helpers by IRCTC as is being conducted by the railways; and

(e) the manner in which cooperative societies of said helpers are proposed to be given priority in tenders of stalls by IRCTC and the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) At present catering services on Indian Railways are done through private license and the departmental staff of Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC).

(c) and (d) The Helpers are engaged by Cosmission vendors/bearers on their own terms and conditions. They are neither railway employees nor they have any contractual relation with the railways. Once the commission vendors/bearers are absorbed or terminated, these helpers cease to operate and they have no locus standi.

(e) At present, there is no proposal to give priority to the helpers of commission vendors/bearers in allotment of catering stalls.

[English]

#### **IA Flights from Trivandrum to Delhi**

5777. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that situation of Indian Airlines flights from Trivandrum to Delhi has been deteriorated; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to improve the situation of flights in the Trivandrum-Delhi sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) With effect from 1st May, 2006, due to operational constraints, a total of 22 flights, including Delhi-Mumbai-Trivandrum flight, were withdrawn. With the improvement in the aircraft availability, this flight was restored on 1st August, 2006. However, Trivandrum to Delhi flight remained unaffected.

(b) The equipment OP the Trivandrum-Mumbai-Delhi and v. v. route has been upgraded from A-319 to A-320 from 1st May, 2007 so as to offer more number of seats in both business and economy class.

#### **Automobile Plants in Tamil Nadu**

5778. SHRI M. APPADURAI: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the actual share of Tamil Nadu in production of Two wheelers and Four wheelers during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the share of Tamil Nadu is gradually decreasing when compared to Haryana or Maharashtra;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Union Government has received several proposals from Foreign Automobile Manufacturers to set up new plants in Tamil Nadu;

(e) if so, the number of applications cleared during each of the last three years and the number of proposals pending with Union Government; and

(f) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for speedy clearance of the above pending proposal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) According to Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), the share of Tamil Nadu in production of two wheelers and four wheelers during last three years is as under:—

#### **State Contribution in Total Production (In Percentage)**

| State       | Category      | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|-------------|---------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Tamil Nadu  | Four Wheelers | 20.11   | 21.64   | 21.95   |
|             | Two Wheelers  | 18.22   | 18.36   | 18.31   |
| Haryana     | Four Wheelers | 34.56   | 33.65   | 32.30   |
|             | Two Wheelers  | 48.66   | 47.48   | 48.80   |
| Maharashtra | Four Wheelers | 35.66   | 35.66   | 36.76   |
|             | Two Wheelers  | 8.54    | 7.97    | 8.99    |

(b) and (c) As per the above figures, Tamil Nadu's share in total production of four wheelers which was 20.11% and two wheelers which was 18.22% in 2004-05 have increased to 21.95% and 18.31% respectively in 2006-07.

(d) to (f) According to Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion, at present the Foreign Direct Investment upto 100% is allowed under the automatic route in the manufacturing of automobiles. As such, entrepreneurs/investors are not required to obtain any Government approval in this regard. According to SIAM,

existing companies like Hyundai Motor India and new companies like BMW and Mahindra-Renault-Nissan are likely to expand or create capacity in Tamil Nadu.

[Translation]

#### **Religious Conversion Amendment Bill**

5779. DR. RAJESH MISHRA: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Jain Community through the National Commission for Minorities have expressed strong

reaction to the Religious Conversion (Amendment) Bill passed by the State Government of Gujarat and the Jain Society has threatened to launch a countrywide agitation; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) and (b) The Jain community, represented to the National Commission for Minorities, its anguish over the decision of the Gujarat legislature to amend the Gujarat Freedom of Religion Act and to declare Buddhists and Jains as Hindus for purposes of religious conversion.

A Press Note was issued by the National Commission for Minorities expressing the view that the right to profess, practice and propagate religion, guaranteed by Article 25 of the Constitution, is an essential ingredient of the country's multi-religious edifice. The State Government has been urged to maintain the sanctity of this basic provision and to resolve any misgivings/misunderstandings through dialogue.

[English]

#### **Representation on Non-Implementation of Policies/Programmes for SCs/STs**

5780. SHRI SUKDEO PASWAN:

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:

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

(a) whether the Government has received any representation from 'Dalit Intellectual's Forum for Human Rights' on non-implementation of policies and programmes for welfare of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken on irregularities mentioned in the representation;

(c) whether the Government has decided to defend all court cases of SCs/STs through a single agency/

department in view of acts brought out in the representation;

(d) whether the Government is considering to engage the same advocate of SCs/STs in its case as well, in cases where the Government and SCs/STs are on the same side of the case, as suggested in the representation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

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

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[Translation]

#### **Rumours of Bomb in Aeroplanes**

5781. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU:

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA :

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of incidents of rumours of bomb in aeroplanes resulting in the disruption of flights in the country during the last year;

(b) whether an incident of the Indian Airlines' flight from Bangkok to Delhi had recently created terror by announcing that there was a bomb in the plane; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken against the persons held responsible for spreading rumours of bomb in planes and airport premises?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) There were total 112 bomb calls reported at airports in the country during the year 2006.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. On 21-3-2007 at about 1415 hrs Captain S. S. Kohli of IC-854, Bangkok-Delhi flight, informed ATC, Kolkata that a Mexican passenger was creating nuisance in the flight and shouting that he would blow the aircraft by the bomb under his seat. The flight

was permitted to land at Kolkata en route Delhi. The said passenger was off loaded. Anti Sabotage checks were carried out and after thorough checks, the flight was cleared for take off. The passenger was arrested and a case was registered against him with the local Police Station.

#### **Maintenance of Memorials and Mausoleums**

5782. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is maintaining the Memorials (ghats) and mausoleums pertaining to various personalities;

(b) if so, the details of the work undertaken in this regard during the last three years; and

(c) the details of the steps being taken by the Government to make the nearby area of these memorials and historically important places free from encroachments/crowd and also to redevelop them?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

#### **Buddhist Chaityas and Monastery**

5783. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether three Buddhist Chaityas and a Monastery, a 3-dimensional structure, broken images, pillars and pottery from the first and second Century AD have been found in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details of discovery made by ASI;

(c) whether it is also fact that Ghantasala village of Krishna District was first reported a historical sight by Buswell to the East India Company in 1870-71; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to excavate this area for more and more historical discoveries?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The scientific clearance, carried out by the Archaeological Survey of India at Yernampadu mound, Ghantasala (District Krishna, Andhra Pradesh) in February-March 2006, has exposed remains of three square brick platforms which were served to enshrine Buddhist statues, known as Buddhist *chaitya*. These platforms were referred to as three dimensional structures. In addition, fragmentary limestone pillars, architectural members and pottery of the first and second century A.D. were discovered.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Archaeological Survey of India carried out excavations at Yernampadu mound, Ghantasala (District Krishna, Andhra Pradesh) in 1984-85. Excavations revealed three cultural phases, and among other things, remains of a Buddhist monastic complex. In 2006, the Archaeological Survey of India undertook scientific clearance work here and exposed above-mentioned structural remains and artifacts. After exposure, conservation and preservation of important archaeological remains were undertaken.

#### **Sea Food Industry**

5784. SHRI SUBRATA BOSE: Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has proposed to implement any special scheme to improve sea food industry in the coastal States taking into account the vast manpower and infrastructure available there;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the details of revenue generated through the sea food processing industries in West Bengal and Orissa during the last five years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (c) Ministry of Food Processing Industries extends financial assistance to fish processing industry 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 maximum of Rs. 75 lakhs in difficult areas.

Aquaculture is a major contributor for seafood exports from the country. To increase the development of aquaculture, the Ministry of Agriculture has taken initiatives through National Fisheries Development Board for expansion of aquaculture into new areas increasing the production and productivity in already developed areas and also through diversification of aquaculture. Maximum efforts are being done to promote aquaculture sector in order to supply raw materials to seafood industry. The development of aquaculture in the coastal states has generated a lot of employment in the rural areas particularly among the rural poor and contributed to development of the rural economy as well. As on 2005-06, about 1,91,000 hectare have been developed for shrimp farming, and about 51,500 hectare for scampi farming, 1,43,170 MT of shrimp and 42,820 MT of scampi were produced respectively for export. A Mission Mode Programme has been initiated for expansion of shrimp and scampi farming in under-developed and unutilized areas of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Orissa. Government is encouraging farmers to form aqua clubs for promoting better management practices in clusters of shrimp farming areas aiming towards increasing production, productivity and returns. This concept has been highly successful in reducing the risks of diseases and increasing the production and at the same time reducing the cost of production. The pilot scale work done in Andhra Pradesh is now being expanded to other states like Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Orissa.

Further, the Ministry of Commerce has also introduced various schemes through Marine Products Export Development Authority for promoting capture fisheries, culture fisheries, development of infrastructural

facilities and market promotion for improving equipping the industry for the export of marine products.

(d) The revenue generated through exports by the seafood processing industries in West Bengal and Orissa during the last five years are furnished below:

| Period  | West Bengal<br>(Rs. Crore) | Orissa<br>(Rs. Crore) |
|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------|
| 2006-07 | 558.75                     | 355.18                |
| 2005-06 | 467.75                     | 316.20                |
| 2004-05 | 447.12                     | 248.68                |
| 2003-04 | 442.53                     | 181.54                |
| 2002-03 | 417.90                     | 259.04                |

#### **New Schemes in 21st Century**

5785. SHRI K.J.S.P. REDDY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has decided to embrace the 21st century by opting several new methods;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the aim and objectives for such move?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Modern scientific tools like Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), Global Positioning System (GPS), Geographical Information System (GIS) etc. are being used by the Archaeological Survey of India in the conservation of monuments and for archaeological excavations. The ASI has a science Branch equipped with a full-fledged laboratory at Dehradun for scientific conservation and material studies. ASI also makes use of the modern scientific facilities available with the IITs and other national institutions.

The application of the new techniques and scientific tools provide better understanding of the problems and their solutions.



### **Status of Telugu Language**

5786. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to accord Telugu language the same status as Tamil and Sanskrit;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh and several other organizations have made representations to declare Telugu as a classical language. The requests were forwarded to Sahitya Akademi for consideration of the Committee of Linguistic Experts constituted for the purpose. The recommendations of the Committee are awaited.

### **Second International Airport in Punjab**

5787. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to develop second international Airport in Punjab;

(b) if so, whether any site for the purpose has been identified;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether a techno-economic feasibility study has been conducted for the project;

(e) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(f) the further action taken thereon alongwith the time schedule fixed for completion of the project?

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

(b) and (c) A site for a civil air terminal has been identified at Halwara Air Force Airfield.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) and (f) The matter is under consideration.

### **Congestion at Delhi and Mumbai Airports**

5788. SHRI A. SAI PRATHAP:

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:

SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR:

SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:

SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether air congestion is high at Delhi and Mumbai airports particularly during the peak holiday summer season; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to address congestion at these airports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) There is air-traffic congestion at Delhi and Mumbai airports during the peak hours.

(b) The measures taken to reduce the congestion at these airports include construction of new high speed exit taxiways, simultaneous use of both runways, improved ATC procedures, restriction of general aviation aircraft movement, ATC automation system etc.

### **Missing of Defence Personnel**

5789. SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received any report on the missing of defence personnel in the country;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) No defence personnel in the

Officers' cadre has been reported missing. The details regarding number of Personnel Below Officer Ranks (PBORs) reported missing are as follows:

| Sl. No. | Year | Army | Navy | Air Force |
|---------|------|------|------|-----------|
| 1.      | 2004 | Nil  | —    | 08        |
| 2.      | 2005 | 02   | —    | 04        |
| 3.      | 2006 | 04   | 01   | 05        |
| Total   |      | 06   | 01   | 17        |

When a defence personnel becomes absent without leave (AWL), efforts are made initially to trace the individual. Subsequently, a Court of Inquiry is ordered to look into the circumstances in which the defence personnel went missing. If the Court of Inquiry establishes that the defence personnel is not a deserter and is missing, the terminal benefits as applicable except death gratuity or ex-gratia are released to the Next of Kin (NOK) of such personnel after one year from the date the individual is reported as missing, in accordance with the laid down procedure. However, in case where the Court of Inquiry establishes that the missing defence personnel is a deserter, the terminal benefits are not released. Efforts are also made to apprehend the deserter with the help of civil authorities.

#### **Paintings in Ajanta Caves**

5790. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the paintings in the Ajanta Caves are not safe;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the Government has investigated the matter; and

(d) if so, the preventive measures taken by the Government to protect the paintings in the Ajanta caves?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The paintings at Ajanta are safe and are in good state of preservation.

(c) and (d) Apart from undertaking regular conservation, preservation and maintenance, the Archaeological Survey of India has assigned Geological Survey of India (GSI) to conduct geo-technical studies of the Caves and recommend methods for conservation of the Caves and prevent them from natural disintegration. The GSI would also recommend methods for arresting seepage of water into the Caves.

As already suggested by the Panel of Experts, Archaeological Survey of India has taken up a programme for providing surface water drainage which is expected to minimize seepage into the Caves. It is proposed that the design of the surface drainage would be prepared by the Central Water Power Research Station (CWPRS), Pune.

Sustained preservation measures are implemented as per annual programme. These include consolidation of painted plasters, monitoring of environmental parameters, dusting of painted surface, spraying of insecticides on the unpainted portions of the plaster; other preventive measures include regulating the movement of visitors inside the painted caves to control the relative humidity and Fibre optic light system is installed in five painted caves eliminating the harmful effects of heat and other ultraviolet and infrared radiations.

#### **Small Railway Stations**

5791. SHRI UDAY SINGH:

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the fact that smaller stations in the country are in a state of disrepair;

(b) if so, whether the Railways have been totally neglecting the upkeep of smaller railway stations in the country which are also used by lakhs of people every day;

(c) if so, the facts thereof; and

(d) the plans of the Railways to provide basic amenities at small railway stations in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The stations are attended regularly for repairs and periodical maintenance activities like white washing/colour washing, repairs to station building, platform surface, etc.

(d) Minimum essential amenities have already been provided at all stations including small railway stations as per their categories.

#### **Impact of Terrorism on Tourism**

5792. SHRI ABDULLAKUTTY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted any study or survey to assess the impact of terrorist activities on tourism growth;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the sectors worst effected by the terrorist activities; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Analyses of tourists arrivals to India have shown that major incidents of terrorism such as the 9/11 incident at World Trade Centre in New York in 2001 and the attack on Indian Parliament in December 2001 (coupled with Afghan conflict in 2002 and Indo-Pak border tension during the period), had an adverse impact on tourism. There was a decline in foreign tourist arrivals in the country by 4.2% in 2001 and a further decline by 6.0% in 2002. From 2003 onwards, the arrivals have registered positive growth. The analyses have also

revealed that sporadic incidents of terrorism may have immediate and localized adverse impact on tourism, but tourist traffic picks up again.

(c) Tourism being an amalgam of various sectors like hotels, food and beverages, transport, travel agencies, etc., any growth or decline in tourist arrivals has its impact on these sectors.

(d) In order to take care of any negative publicity and adverse impact on tourist arrivals due to terrorist attacks, the Ministry of Tourism takes up from time to time the matter with the Ministry of External Affairs, Domestic and Overseas Indiatourism offices, and trade associations to counteract adverse publicity.

#### **Plying of Private Aeroplanes from Bidar Aerodrome**

5793. SHRI K. VIRUPAKSHAPPA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bidar Runway which is located in the Indian Air Force land is one of the best Runway in the world;

(b) if so, whether the private aeroplanes are likely to start plying from this aerodrome; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Bidar runway has appropriate facilities required for the operation of military aircraft.

(b) and (c) Air HQ has conveyed its 'in principle' approval for operation of civil flight from Bidar airfield, subject to the condition that necessary infrastructure facilities like, separate apron for parking of civil aircraft, associated taxiway, terminal for arrival/departure of passenger and separate entry/exit route for passenger terminal are created by Ministry of Civil Aviation.

*[Translation]*

#### **Helicopter Crash in Slachin**

5794. SHRI PARAS NATH YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the two pilots were killed in a helicopter crash in Siachin recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons behind the helicopter crash; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to prevent such incidents in future and providing compensation to the victim families?

**THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY):** (a) and (b) One Cheetah Helicopter crashed on 11-4-2007 near Amar Helipad (Siachen) in which both the pilots were killed.

(c) The helicopter crashed due to engine failure.

(d) A continuous and multi-faced effort is always underway in the Defence Forces to enhance and upgrade flight safety. Measures to enhance the quality of training to improve the skill levels, ability to exercise sound judgement and situational awareness of pilots are being pursued. Constant interaction with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs), both indigenous and foreign, is also maintained to overcome the technical defects of aircraft. Besides, anti-bird measures are also undertaken.

Compensation to the next of kin of the deceased is given as per extant Government policy.

#### **Participation by Foreign Companies in Production of Arms**

**5795. SHRI SAJJAN KUMAR:**

**SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA:**

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some foreign companies have offered their initiative for production of spare parts of the arms in the ordnance factories in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAO INDERJIT SINGH):** (a) No foreign

company has proposed for production of spare parts of the arms in the Ordnance Factories in the country.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

*[English]*

#### **Facilities in Garib Rath Trains**

**5796. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether only 50% bed rolls and blankets have been provided in Garib Rath trains;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Railways are aware of difficulties being faced by the passengers in Garib Rath, who are being denied for providing bed rolls and blankets due to 50% availability; and

(d) if so, 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.

#### **VR Scheme in BSCL**

**5797. SHRI SUNIL KHAN:** Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has issued directions to the management of Burn Standard Company Limited (BSCL) for launching further VR Scheme pending finalization of the Revival Scheme by the Company;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether BSCL has recruited some Senior and Junior level Executives during pendency of the BIFR proceeding; and

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

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY**

INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) and (b) No Sir.

(c) and (d) In order to overcome technical and managerial deficiencies in production, about 13 people have been recruited from 2001 to 2007. This was necessitated for filling up only critical posts falling vacant due to retirement/resignation/death etc. However, the posts vacated on account of voluntary retirement (VRS) have not been filled up by the company.

**Passengers and Cargo  
Traffic at Airports**

5798. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the capacity of most of the airports in the country are under-utilised;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the actual passenger and cargo traffic handled by each of the under-utilised airports in each of the last three years; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for optimum utilisation of these airports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Majority of the airports are fully utilized. In any case, airport capacities are built with a futuristic horizon. It is possible that at some airports present passenger/Cargo handling is less than the terminal capacity planned for saturation at later dates.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Government have laid down Route Dispersal Guidelines requiring all domestic scheduled operators to deploy minimum specified capacities on routes to north Eastern States, jammu and Kashmir, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Lakshadweep Islands and on non-trunk routes. In addition concessional airport charges such as parking and housing charges are levied at non-metro airports to incentivise air operations at such airports.

[Translation]

**Discovery by ONGC**

5799. DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item published in the "Economic Times" dated April 14, 2007 under the caption "ONGC admits no major discoveries in 20 years";

(b) if so, whether the ONGC conferred with the status of "Navratna" has failed to explore any major oil and gas reserves;

(c) if so, the facts thereof and the reaction of the Government in regard to the working of the said company;

(d) whether the private sector oil companies have found any new reserves of oil and gas during the past years; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the contribution of the private oil companies in the field of new discoveries and exploration, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. It may be clarified that Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) considers the terminology "Major Discovery" as discovery of 500 MMboe (Million Barrels oil equivalent) of recoverable reserves, and ONGC not having made any such discovery during the period referred to the media article would have a degree of validity.

It may, however, be stated that ONGC's exploration strategy is a mix of resource utilization for exploration while also concentrating its efforts towards field growth. Thus, ONGC has also been focusing on exploration in areas contiguous to known discoveries. If the discovered 20 major fields of ONGC are considered, in the twenty year period mentioned in the article (1987-2007), ONGC

has, in fact, accreted 3990 MMboe (O+OEG) of recoverable reserves equivalent to eight majors (giants). The discoveries made by ONGC under Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) regime are under various stages of appraisal. Size of discoveries will be known after the appraisal.

ONGC has established 2876.98 million metric tonnes of oil and oil equivalent gas (MMtoe) inplace including accretion from field growth which includes 1811.21 MMt oil inplace in the last twenty years (1987-2007).

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. As far as Private Companies/ Joint Ventures (JVs) are concerned, new oil and gas reserves have been found in the country during the past years. The initial in-place reserves established by Private Companies/JVs from few new discoveries as on 31-3-2006 are oil 244 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) and gas 408 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM). Other discoveries are at various stages of appraisal.

Details of exploration inputs and discoveries made by Private Companies/JVs are given in the enclosed Statement.

#### **Statement**

| State             | Seismic Surveys till 31-3-06 |             | Exploratory Wells (No.) till 31-3-06 | No. of discoveries made till 31-3-07 |
|-------------------|------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                   | 2 D (GLK)                    | 3D (Sq. Km) |                                      |                                      |
| Assam             | 558                          | —           | 1                                    | —                                    |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 60                           | —           | 1                                    | —                                    |
| Andhra Pradesh    | 910                          | —           | —                                    | —                                    |
| Rajasthan         | 9272                         | 1879        | 118                                  | 15                                   |
| Gujarat           | 720                          | 844         | 29                                   | 7                                    |
| Himachal Pradesh  | 164                          | —           | —                                    | —                                    |
| Tamil Nadu        | —                            | 278         | —                                    | —                                    |
| Offshore          | 75229                        | 57955       | 153                                  | 43                                   |

#### **Production Capacity of Refineries**

5800. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

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

(a) the estimated production capacity of the refineries of the country during the year 2007-08;

(b) whether the production capacity is more than the current consumption requirements;

(c) if so, the details of the assessment made by the Government in this regard;

(d) the estimated production capacity of the refineries by the year 2012;

(e) whether the Planning Commission has given

its consent to the proposal for increasing the said production capacity; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and 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) The present refining capacity of the refineries of the country is 148.97 million metric tonnes per annum (MMTPA).

(b) and (c) The refining capacity is more than the current consumption requirements and India is a net exporter of Petroleum Products.

Higher refining capacity over and above the domestic requirements will boost export earnings from export of petroleum products through value addition, and will enhance energy security of the country.

(d) The refining capacity of the refineries by the year 2011-12 is estimated to be 240.96 million metric tonnes per annum.

(e) and (f) The refinery sector was delicensed in June, 1998. Since then a refinery can be set up anywhere in India by private or public sector enterprises depending on the promoters' assessment of its viability. It is not the Central Government but public or private sector enterprises who consider proposals for setting

up new refineries/expansion of capacity.

[English]

### **Railway Projects in Gujarat**

5801. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the ongoing/new railway projects and surveys in Gujarat;

(b) the details of funds allocated and expenditure incurred on each of these projects alongwith the progress achieved so far in such projects;

(c) whether the Government has received any representations for special package for railway projects in Gujarat;

(d) if so, the details and the action taken by the railways thereon; and

(e) the steps taken by the railways to complete ongoing projects in time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Details of ongoing/new projects falling fully/partly in the State of Gujarat alongwith outlay provided during 2007-08 and approximate expenditure incurred thereon are as under:—

| Sl. No.                 | Project                      | Length<br>(in Kms.) | Anticipated<br>cost | Outlay<br>during<br>2007-08 | Approximate<br>Expenditure<br>upto March,<br>2007 | Remarks  |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|
| 1                       | 2                            | 3                   | 4                   | 5                           | 6   | 7  |
| <b>NEW LINE</b>         |                              |                     |                     |                             |   |  |
| 1.                      | Gandhinagar-Adraj Moti-Kalol | 20.06               | 49.96               | 4.99                        | 51.00   | Work has been completed and yet to be commissioned.  |
| 2.                      | Dahod-Indore and Dewas-Maksi | 236                 | 678.56              | 06.00                       | 56.00   | Dewas-Maksi new line has been commissioned and necessary clearance for balance work obtained. Preliminary works like final location survey, preparation of plans and estimates etc. is being taken up.   |
| 3.                      | Chhota Udaipur-Dhar          | 157                 | 570.00              | 0.01                        | 0   | New work included in the Budget 2007-08.   |
| <b>GAUGE CONVERSION</b> |                              |                     |                     |                             |   |  |
| 1.                      | Bhildi-Samdari               | 223                 | 244.74              | 110.00                      | 103.00  | This work is being executed by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited. Earth work and bridge works have been taken up. This work is planned for completion during 2008-09.   |
| 2.                      | Bharuch-Samni-Dahej          | 62.36               | 165.66              | 2.60                        | 0   | This work is being executed by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited. Special Purpose Vehicle named Bharuch-Dahej Railway Company Limited has been formed and shareholders agreement has also been signed. The process of award of contract will start after signing of the Concession Agreement. |



| 1        | 2  | 3     | 4      | 5     | 6      | 7  |
|----------|--|-------|--------|-------|--------|--|
| 3.       | Pratapnagar-Chhota Udepur  | 99.27 | 227.52 | 50.00 | 30.00  | Earth work and bridge works have been taken to Pratapnagar-Bodeli section is targeted to completion during 2007-08.                                    |
| 4.       | Rajkot-Veraval, Wansjaliala-Jetalsar with new line from Veraval to Somnath | 281   | 508.87 | 38.00 | 370.00 | Work on Rajkot-Veraval gauge conversion with extension to Somnath has been completed. Gauge Conversion of Wansjaliala-Jetalsar has also been taken up. |
| 5.       | Bhildi-Viramgam  | 157   | 124.65 | 45.00 | 110.00 | Work on Viramgam-Mahesana has been completed and Mahesana-Patan is targeted for completion during 2007-08.   |
| 6.       | Phulera-Marwar-Ahmedabad   | 654.5 | 517.07 | 5.28  | 497.00 | Work has been completed and commissioned except Sabarmati-Khodiya (11 Km.) which has been taken up.  |
| 7.       | Rajpipla-Ankleshwar  | 62.89 | 115.00 | 10.00 | 0      | Work included in the Budget 2006-07. Preparation of plans and estimates has been taken up.   |
| 8.       | Surendranagar-Bhavnagar, Dhola-Dhasa-Mahuva with extension to Pipavav      | 387   | 562.27 | 30.00 | 510.00 | Main line work has been completed and commissioned. Work on Surendranagar. Dhran-gadhra has been taken up and targeted is completion during 2007-08.   |
| DOUBLING |  |       |        |       |        |  |
| 1.       | Surat-Kosamba  | 35    | 49.00  | 0.1   | 0      | This project has been accorded low operation priority.   |

Details of ongoing/new surveys falling fully/partly in the State of Gujarat are as under:—

| Surveys   | Plan Head        | Length (in KMs). |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Ningala-Gadhad-Babra-Khijadia Junction                                  | New Line         | 70               |
| Porbander-Veraval   | New Line         | 130              |
| Dhasa-Jetalsar  | Gauge Conversion | 104              |
| Bhuj-Naliya with extension to Naliya-Baranda/Koteshwar                  | Gauge Conversion | 161              |
| Mahesana-Taranga Hill with extension to Ambaji                          | Gauge Conversion | 112              |
| Ratlam-Akola including Fatehabad Chandravatiganj-Ujjain                 | Gauge Conversion | 475              |
| Kosamba-Umarpada  | Gauge Conversion | 62               |
| Miyagam-Dabhoi-Samlaya  | Gauge Conversion | 79.10            |
| Samni-Jambusar-Vishwamitri and Jamhusar-Kavi                            | Gauge Conversion | 99.16            |
| Viramgam-Surendranagar  | Doubling         | 65               |
| Delhi-Ahmedabad   | Doubling         | 934              |
| 3rd line between Ratlam-Vadodara  | Doubling         | 256              |
| 3rd line between Ahmedabad-Viramgam and doubling of Gandhidham Viramgam | Doubling         | 300              |

(c) and (d) Hon'ble Members of Parliament from the State of Gujarat has given a Memorandum pertaining to various issues. A meeting was held with them at Ahmedabad on 03-04-2007. Necessary action to the issues raised by them is being taken.

(e) A number of initiatives have been taken to augment resources for expediting completion of the ongoing projects. These include cost sharing by State Governments, Ministry of Finance, Public Private Partnership, Defence funding and implementation of projects by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited through extra-budgetary resources. State Governments have been requested to share 50% or more of the cost of ongoing new line and gauge conversion projects to expedite their completion.

#### US 'Thousand Ship Navy Programme'

5802. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Navy has shown interest in US 'Thousand Ship Navy (TSN) programme';

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether clearance has been given to this proposal of the Indian Navy;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the time by which the clearance is likely to be accorded?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (e) The 'Thousand Ship Navy (TSN)'

is a concept propounded by the Chief of Naval Operations of USA during a symposium held in September, 2005 in USA. The concept is about sharing of maritime domain awareness information by various maritime agencies world wide to make the seas safe for the use of all nations. Being a concept, the question of according clearance to it does not arise.

#### Gas Pipeline Projects

5803. ADV. SURESH KURUP: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the new gas pipeline policy takes care of the concept of a National Gas Grid conceived and being executed by GAIL;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of various pipeline routes for which private players are awaiting; and

(d) the action taken by the Government to make sure that there will not be any duplication of pipeline routes of GAIL and these companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) While there is no proposal to set up a national gas grid, the Government of India has enacted 'The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Act, 2006' and notified the 'Policy for Development of Natural Gas Pipelines and City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Networks', with the objective of promoting investment from public as well as private sector.

The broad objectives of the policy are:

- (1) To facilitate open access for all players to the pipeline network on a non-discriminatory basis;
- (2) To promote competition among entities, thereby avoiding any abuse of the dominant position by any entity;
- (3) To secure consumer interest in terms of gas availability and reasonable tariff.

GAIL is already operating more than 6000 km of pipelines with a capacity of around 130 MMSCMD for transportation of natural gas to various parts of the country.

Gail's natural gas transmission pipelines, as on 1-3-2007, are as follows:—

| Network/Region                    | Length (in Km) |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Dahej Vijaipur Pipeline           | 612            |
| HVJ including GREP and Spur Lines | 3397           |
| Assam                             | 8              |
| Tripura                           | 61             |
| Gujarat and Rajasthan             | 742            |
| Maharashtra                       | 125            |
| Andhra Pradesh                    | 834            |
| Tamil Nadu                        | 260            |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>6039</b>    |

GAIL has completed the following projects recently:

1. Kelaras-Malanpur pipeline—commissioned in July 2006,
2. Vijaipur-Kota pipeline—commissioned in Jan 2007.
3. Jagoti-Pithampur pipeline—commissioned in March 2007.

Dahej-Uran pipeline project is under implementation.

Besides notifications inviting Expressions of Interest (EOI) have been issued by GAIL for laying the following pipelines for transportation of gas to meet the gas demand of different regions.

- (1) Jagdishpur-Haldia pipeline

- (2) Kochi-Kanjirakkod-Mangalore/Bangalore Pipeline
- (3) Dabhol-Bangalore Pipeline
- (4) Dadri-Bawana-Nangal Pipeline
- (5) Chainsa-Gurgaon-Jhajjar-Hissar Pipeline

(c) Government has accorded approval to Reliance Gas Transportation Infrastructure Limited (RGTIL) for the following pipelines.

1. Kakinada-Hyderabad-Uran-Ahmedabad Pipeline (1509 kms)
2. Kakinada-Chennai Pipeline (445 kms)

Further EoI has been invited by RGTIL for the following:

1. Kakinada-Basudebpur-Howrah Pipeline (1100 kms)
2. Chennai-Bangalore-Mangalore Pipeline (660 kms)
3. Chennai-Tuticorin Pipeline (670 kms)

Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation Limited (GSPCL) has also invited EoI for laying Kakinada-Ahmedabad pipeline.

(d) While issuing authorization for laying pipelines, Government, through its scrutiny, ensures that there is no duplication of pipeline routes.

[Translation]

#### **Afforestation on Both Sides of Railway Tracks**

5804. SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:  
SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO  
GAWALI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have formulated any scheme for afforestation on both sides of the railway tracks passing through the cities;

(b) if so, whether such work has already been undertaken for Akola, Amravati, Jalgaon, Amalner and Bhusaval in Maharashtra;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. There is no specific scheme for plantation of trees on either side of Railway lines in cities. Railways have a general policy for doing plantation on vacant land.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

#### **Basic Facilities to Labourers**

5805. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the steps taken by the Railways to provide basic facilities to the labourers working in railway goods godowns?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): Zonal Railways have been advised to provide following facilities to the labourers working in railways goods godowns:

- Drinking water
- Toilets
- Resting facilities
- Raised taps for bathing purpose.

[English]

#### **Hydrogen Blended Natural Gas**

5806. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has launched any pilot project for mixing of hydrogen gas with natural gas for being used as the fuel purposes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has evaluated the cost

effectiveness as well as efficacy of the blended gas as an alternative fuel; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) A project for introduction of Hydrogen-Compressed Natural Gas (H-CNG) blends on a trial basis in existing CNG vehicles has been planned by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) to be undertaken in collaboration with the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM) and Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL). The project aims for introduction of H-CNG blend as a fuel in light duty vehicles, cars and three wheelers, involving five leading Indian automobile manufacturers viz, Tata Motors, Ashok Leyland, Eicher Motors, Mahindra and Mahindra and Bajaj Auto by using the existing Hydrogen dispensing facility set up at IOC (R and D) Centre at Faridabad.

Further, another H-CNG dispensing station has been planned to be set up by IOC (R and D) along with the MNRE at Delhi for refueling vehicles running on H-CNG blends and on 100% Hydrogen under following developmental/demonstration projects:—

- (i) National Hydrogen Energy Board (NHEB) funded project on "use of H-CNG blended fuels in Light Duty Vehicles.
- (ii) Centre for High Technology (CHT) funded project on "use of H-CNG blended fuels in Heavy Duty Vehicles.
- (iii) Hydrogen vehicles developed by Banaras Hindu University (BHU).

(c) and (d) At this stage, it is not possible to evaluate cost effectiveness and efficacy of H-CNG blended fuel. The cost effectiveness and efficacy will depend upon the outcome of further tests and trials as well as cost of production of commercial Hydrogen.

#### **Performance of Retail Outlets Allotted to SCs/STs**

5807. SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the special efforts the oil companies are taking to improve the performance of retail outlets being operated by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;

(b) whether the Public Sector Oil Units have allocated any corpus fund to the SC/ST dealers of petrol retail outlets; and

(c) if so, the details of such funds allocated during each of the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) The Filled Officers of the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) counsel the empanelled/selected persons for Retail Outlet dealerships eligible under Corpus Fund Scheme and make such dealers aware of their rights and responsibilities towards proper functioning of the dealership as per dealership agreement and Marketing Discipline Guidelines so that the dealerships can operate in a smooth manner. Training of dealers is also organized by OMCs to impart product knowledge, operation, finance, and safety aspects. Further, OMCs impart training to improve the capability building and augmenting the entrepreneurial skill of the dealers of retail outlets being operated by SCs/STs from time to time. These include specially arranged workshops for newly inducted dealers.

(b) and (c) Under the Corpus Fund Scheme in respect of locations reserved for SC/ST categories, the concerned OMC will make available the ready retail outlets with all basic facilities at its own cost. OMCs will also provide adequate working capital loan for a full operation cycle of the operation of the dealerships. Both the working capital as well as 11% per annum interest thereon will be recovered in 100 equal monthly instalments from the 13th month of commissioning of the dealership.

The Corpus fund allocated by the OMCs during the last three years are as under:

| Year    | Rs. in lakhs |
|---------|--------------|
| 2004-05 | 1639.25      |
| 2005-06 | 3182.80      |
| 2006-07 | 3782.30      |

#### **OVL-CNPC Joint Venture**

5808. SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether China's China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC) has offered equity participation to ONGC Videsh (OVL) in some of its exploration blocks in Africa:

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by the OVL in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with China National Petroleum Corporation (CNPC), a National Oil Company of China on 1st November, 2005 for cooperation in hydrocarbon sector. Both OVL and CNPC are also partners in Greater Nile Oil Project (GNOP) in Sudan and Al Furat project in Syria and share opportunities with each other. Currently, CNPC has made an offer for participation in a West African country where it owns a stake. OVL takes investment decisions on the basis of commercial consideration after due diligence.

[Translation]

#### **Lower Berth to Senior Citizens and Women**

5809. SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the announcement in regard to reserving lower berths for women and senior citizens

was made in the Rail Budget for 2007-08 whereas additional charges upto Rs.15 to 20 are being taken from women and senior citizens for reserving lower berth under the new system;

(b) if so, the reasons for imposing additional charges;

(c) the reaction of the Railways thereto; and

(d) the details of incidents reported in this regard and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Although instructions have been issued for earmarking of a combined quota of lower berths for Senior Citizens, Female passengers 45 years of age and above, and Pregnant Women travelling alone, no additional charges have been imposed.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

#### **Purchase of 155 mm Cannon (Guns)**

5810. SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether 155 mm cannon (guns) purchase of which was put off due to Dannel episode are being re-considered for purchase/are likely to be purchased;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTONY): (a) and (b) A decision has been taken to procure 155 mm guns and the procurement process has been initiated strictly in accordance with the Defence Procurement Procedure.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

#### **Kerala Sahitya Academy Golden Jubilee Complex**

5811. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Kerala Sahitya Academy sent a proposal seeking financial assistance for establishing Kerala Sahitya Academy Golden Jubilee Complex;

(b) If so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (c) A proposal for construction of Kerala Sahitya Academy Golden Jubilee Cultural Complex at Thiruvananthapuram at the cost of Rs. 98.00 lakhs was received in December 2006. The proposal was deficient in many areas like application not being in proper format, autonomous body set up by the State Government for handling the project not specified, availability of land with Plot number and exact location/map not enclosed etc. By the time the revised proposal was received in April 2007, MPCC Scheme had been discontinued by the Planning Commission. Planning Commission has been requested to allow the scheme to continue in XI Five Year Plan. Government of Kerala has been advised to re-submit the proposal if the Scheme is continued.

### Weight of the Coaches

5812. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are considering to reduce the weight of the coaches to improve their efficiency; and

(b) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A new design of light weight coaches was acquired under transfer of technology agreement with M/s Linke Hoffman Busch and about 400 such coaches have already been manufactured indigenously at Rail Coach Factory, Kapurthala.

These coaches are lighter than the existing Integral Coach Factory (ICF) design coaches as detailed in the enclosed Statement. These coaches, besides being lighter, have a higher carrying capacity of about 10-12% as compared to corresponding ICF design coaches and earn more revenue at lesser hauling cost.

### Statement

#### *Comparative data of Weight and Seating capacity of LHB Design and ICF Design coaches*

| Type of coaches          | Tare Weight (tonne) |            | Seating capacity |            |
|--------------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------|------------|
|                          | LHB Design          | ICF Design | LHB Design       | ICF Design |
| 1                        | 2                   | 3          | 4                | 5          |
| <b>Rajdhani/Shatabdi</b> |                     |            |                  |            |
| AC First                 | 43.3                | 46.2       | 24               | 18         |
| AC 2 Tier                | 44.5                | 44.8       | 52               | 48         |
| AC 3 Tier                | 45.6                | 48.3       | 72               | 64         |
| Power Car                | 53                  | 60         | 0                | 0          |
| Pantry Car               | 40.8                | 47.9       | 0                | 0          |

| 1                   | 2     | 3     | 4  | 5  |
|---------------------|-------|-------|----|----|
| 2 AC Chair Car      | 39    | 43.1  | 78 | 67 |
| 1 AC Chair Car      | 39    | 42.6  | 56 | 46 |
| <b>Mail/Express</b> |       |       |    |    |
| AC First            | 47.5  | 49.7  | 24 | 18 |
| AC 2 Tier           | 48.34 | 49.1  | 52 | 48 |
| AC 3 Tier           | 50.58 | 52.53 | 72 | 64 |
| General Second      | 37.57 | 36.99 | 99 | 90 |
| Second Sleeper      | 39.6  | 38.3  | 78 | 72 |

**Theft Cases at Airports**

5813. SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of theft cases reported at Calcutta and Delhi International airports during each of the last two years, airport-wise;

(b) the number of cases out of them which have been solved as on March, 2007;

(c) the number of pending cases and the time by which these are likely to be solved; and

(d) the remedial measures proposed to be taken to control such thefts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The number of theft cases reported at Delhi airport during 2005 and 2006 were 72 and 145 respectively while no theft case was reported at Calcutta airport during these two years.

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

(d) It is proposed to increase CCTV camera, coverage intensively in the airport premises as also have better upkeep of security gadgets.

**Feasibility of Jatropha Plantation**

5814. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are contemplating to use bio-diesel blended fuel in locomotives starting from 10% to 20% blended diesel;

(b) whether the Railways have also considered floating tenders for bulk buying of bio-diesel;

(c) if so, the details alongwith names of suppliers;

(d) whether Railways have assessed the availability of jatropha based bio-diesel in the country as well as its cost-effectiveness;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Railways also examined the feasibility of jatropha plantation and setting up bio-diesel plant on their own to fulfil their huge requirement; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Yes, Sir. The successful field trial has been carried out by using 10% blend of bio-diesel on Jan Shatabdi Express between Lucknow and Allahabad. Further, field trials have also been conducted successfully with 20% blend.



(b) The matter regarding floating of tenders for bulk buying of bio-diesel is under consideration.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) To assess the availability of bio-diesel an expression of interests was called on 20-2-2007 and about 25 parties have participated in the meeting. The cost effectiveness of blending can only be judged after receipt of offers.

(f) and (g) Yes, Sir. Railways have taken up plantation on spare available Railway land and a project for setting up of 4 nos. of esterification plants for producing bio-diesel is being contemplated.

#### **Demand of LPG in Delhi**

5815. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG agencies functioning in various States as on March 31, 2007;

(b) whether after the supply of PNG in Delhi, the demand of LPG has come down in such areas;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government proposes to shift LPG agencies from such areas where PNG pipeline supply exist in Delhi; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) As on 31-3-2007, 3 Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), namely Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) were operating 9363 LPG distributorships in the country.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. The total sales of LPG with the LPG distributors of OMCs in Delhi, where Piped Natural Gas (PNG) is supplied, has marginally increased during the year 2006-07 over the year 2005-06, which is as under:

| Year    | Total sales (in TMT) |
|---------|----------------------|
| 2005-06 | 566.8                |
| 2006-07 | 585.6                |

(d) and (e) At present, there is no proposal to shift LPG distributorships of OMCs from the area of Delhi, where PNG is supplied.

#### **Allotment of Retail Outlets to SCs/STs in Punjab**

5816. SARDAR SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether oil companies have fulfilled the 25% quota set for SC/ST categories for selection of dealers of Retail Sale Outlets in Punjab; and

(b) if so, the details of the letters of Intent issued and R.S.O. delivered during the last three years, year-wise?

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

(b) During the last three years, i.e, 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07, 329 Letters of Intent (LOI) have been issued and 144 retail outlet dealerships have been commissioned in favour of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (SCs/STs) by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies, viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) in the State of Punjab.

#### **Consultative Committee**

5817. SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria fixed by the Railways for nomination of Members to Station Railway Users Consultative Committee;

(b) whether there is any provision for nomination of Members from the office of Divisional Railway Office, Zonal Railway Office etc. on the recommendation of D.R.M. and Zonal Railway Managers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The Station Consultative Committees consists of representatives of Chambers of Commerce, local Trade and Industry, registered Passengers' Associations, local educational institutions, local self-Government bodies and general public. The membership of the committee should, however, not exceed Ten.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

#### **Replacement of Guards Line Boxes with Briefcase**

5818. SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have recently replaced guard's line boxes with briefcase;

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

(c) whether such replacement is likely to affect the safety measures;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there was strong objections from All India Guards Council and other association of railways in this regard;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) whether the box porters are likely to become jobless; and

(h) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by Railways to safeguard their interest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (f) With a view to improve operational efficiency instructions were issued on 20-06-2006 to Zonal Railways for replacement of Guard Line Box with briefcase. However due to certain difficulties pointed out by recognized Federations, the instructions have been put in abeyance till they are revised appropriately. Further since the replacement of line box with briefcase, amounts to only switching over from one type of container to another, to carry the same equipment as are to be carried in a line box, it has no bearing on safety.

(g) and (h) The scheme does not envisage any retrenchment of staff as redeployment is always considered.

#### **MoU with Administrative Ministries**

5819. SHRI EKNATH MAHADEO GAIKWAD:

SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH:

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

(a) whether Public Sector Undertakings have to sign a MoU with their administrative Ministries for fiscal targets;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the ways and means of achieving estimated targets?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) No Sir. The fiscal targets refer to matters relating to Public Finance (i.e. public expenditure, public revenue, public borrowings etc.). The MoUs signed between CPSEs and Administrative Ministries do not relate to fiscal targets; these are rather signed with respect to financial and other targets.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

**Storage of Food Items in Trains**

5820. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

SHRI KAILASH NATH SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the unhygienic and dirty condition of the places of eating, drinking water and storing food in trains;

(b) if so, whether the utensils are washed by the IRCTC in the toilets used by the passengers; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) has issued stringent norms to their licensees for keeping pantry cars clean and in hygienic condition. Third party audit is also conducted apart from regular inspection by officials of Railways and IRCTC to check improvement of cleanliness in pantry car.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

**Passenger Train between  
Delhi and Keonjhar**

5821. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have a proposal to introduce passenger/express train between Delhi and Keonjhar in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express running via Tatanagar is also proposed to be diverted from Tatanagar via Keonjhar once the Diatatri-Banspani line opened for passenger traffic; and

(d) 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) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

**Ratnagiri Gas and Power Project**

5822. SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

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

(a) whether the Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) is favourably considering a Government proposal to infuse additional funds into Ratnagiri Gas and Power Project as reported in the "Business Lines" dated April 30, 2007; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) It has been decided by the Government that GAIL would consider providing assistance to the Ratnagiri Gas and Power Project to complete LNG terminal (except breakwater) by November, 2007.

GAIL has initiated a due diligence of the project through an independent consultant. Due diligence report findings shall be taken up for consideration by the Board of Directors of GAIL.

**Security at Railway Stations in  
Collaboration with IIT**

5823. SHRI JUAL ORAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have a proposal to revamp the security arrangement at the railway stations in Northern Railway;

(b) if so, whether the security is proposed to be strengthened in all the stations of national capitals in

collaboration with Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) as reported in the "Times of India" dated May 04, 2007;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi has been assigned the task of carrying out a security audit of Delhi Main Junction Railway Station with a view to prepare a composite security plan.

(c) and (d) The above mentioned project is a sort of pilot project. For the first time such a project has been assigned to Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi by the Indian Railways. The terms and conditions specified by the Indian Institute of Technology for taking up this project have been accepted by the Railways and a Liaison Officer has been nominated from the Railways for day-to-day co-ordination. Further action will be taken by the Railways on receipt of the report.

#### **Freedom of Oil PSUs to Hire Tankers**

5824. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

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

(a) whether the Union Government has given freedom to Oil PSUs to hire tankers on their own for importing crude oil;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the freedom on hiring vessels is likely to help the Oil PSUs to lower their sea freight bill; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Government on 29-03-2007 have approved the following:

- (i) Continuance by Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOCL) of the system of direct chartering of ships without going through TRANSCHART;
- (ii) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. may charter ships for oil imports directly, instead of going through TRANSCHART;
- (iii) All the companies would follow all applicable regulations relating to hiring of ships including those relating to the Indian flag and shipping on FOB basis.

The system of direct chartering by IOCL has generally worked efficiently and satisfactorily during the last one year.

#### **Cargo Complex at Thiruvananthapuram**

5825. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Kerala State Industrial Enterprises (KSIE) has been operating Cargo Complex connected to Thiruvananthapuram Airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether KSIE has requested to the Union Government for space in the extended area of Thiruvananthapuram Airport re-locating this Cargo Complex; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon?

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

(b) Kerala State Industrial Enterprise (KSIE) are working as custodian of cargo complex at the Trivendrum airport since 1993. They are operating the complex in a built up area of 45000 sq. ft. They have also set up a state of art centre for perishable cargo for export of horticulture, floriculture and other perishable products with financial assistance from APEDA.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) KSIE have requested Airports Authority of India (AAI) for allocation of 10 acres of land for setting up a cargo terminal adjacent to the proposed international terminal building. This request of KSIE has not been considered by AAI due to non availability of sufficient land. However, AAI has plans to construct an international cargo facility within the available land near the proposed international terminal building. AAI has offered to operate the new international cargo facility in Joint Venture with KSIE.

[Translation]

#### **Advance Railway Reservation**

5826. SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA:

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR:

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per guidelines of Railways passengers can reserve their rail tickets 90 days in advance;

(b) if so, whether in gross violation of the guidelines, the rail tickets were reserved before 90 days in many cases;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to enquire into the matter; and

(d) the action taken against the erring railway officials for violating the guidelines for vested interest?

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

(b) No, Sir.

(c) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

#### **New Self Employment Schemes for Manual Scavengers**

5827. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government has launched any major self-employment scheme for manual scavengers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the new scheme is likely to be launched?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A new Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) has been launched in January, 2007. The scheme aims at rehabilitation of remaining manual scavengers and their dependents through capacity building, concessional credit and credit linked capital subsidy.

#### **Oil Exploration by Oil India Limited**

5828. SHRI M.K. SUBBA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the results of the explorations undertaken by the Oil India Limited (OIL) in Assam and other States in the North East during 2005-06 and the current year so far; and

(b) the further steps being taken for exploitation of the oil by OIL from new reserves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Details of exploration efforts undertaken by Oil India Ltd. in Assam and other states in the North East during the years 2005-06 and 2006-07 are furnished below:

**Assam:**

| Sl. No. | Parameter                               | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---------|---|---------|---------|
| 1.      | Seismic Survey, 2D GLKM                 | 651.11  | 361.41  |
| 2.      | Seismic Survey, 3D SQKM                 | 827.40  | 862.01  |
| 3.      | Exploratory Drilling:                   |         |         |
|         | Meters                                  | 45,137  | 34,326  |
|         | No. of Wells                            | 11      | 6       |
| 4.      | Accretion of In-place Reserves (MMT)    | 19.73   | 19.90*  |
| 5.      | Accretion of Recoverable Reserves (MMT) | 8.50    | 10.50*  |

\*Estimated only

**Arunachal Pradesh:**

| Sl. No. | Parameter               | 2005-06 | 2006-07 |
|---------|-------------------------|---------|---------|
| 1.      | Seismic Survey, 2D GLKM | 492.64  | 53.12   |
| 2.      | Seismic Survey, 3D SQKM | —       | 61.38   |

(b) The steps taken by OIL for exploitation of oil reserves in new reserves are as under:

- Development of new discoveries by quick appraisal as well as implementation of horizontal well/J-Bend drilling in suitable reservoirs.
- Production from logistically difficult areas of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh, where seismic survey initiatives have already been taken and drillable prospects have been identified for probing hydrocarbons.
- Installation of Quick Production Set-ups (QPS), Early Production Set-ups (EPS), Oil Collecting Stations (OCS) etc. in newly discovered fields for exploitation/production of crude oil.

— Exploration and production from the NELP/ JV Blocks in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram in the North East.

**Free Air Tickets to Retired  
Officials of A/IA**

5829. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India (AI) and Indian Airlines (IA) provide free air tickets to certain category of their retired officers;

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

(c) the total financial burden on AI/IA on this account during the last three years;

(d) the details of the Government directives and resolutions of boards of AI/IA in this regard; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to check such unlimited and unregulated air facility to retired officers of AI/IA?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY

OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The grant of passages to retired officers of Air India and Indian Airlines are part of their service conditions and are in line with industry practice. In Air India and Indian Airlines, the entitlement of air passage to its retired employees is as under:

#### **Air India**

|  | Free<br>90%   | Concessional<br>95%         |   |
|--|---|-----------------------------|---|
| Retired employees on completion of 20 years of service       | 02  | 02 on inter-national sector | 02 only on domestic, in lieu of 90%                         |
| Retired employees on completion of 25 years of service       | —do—  | —do—                        | Unlimited on domestic sectors for Self, spouse and children |
| Retired employees on completion of 20 years of service       | Eligible for Interline passages on Indian Airlines issued once a year               |                             |   |
| Retired Executives of Deputy General Manager level and above | Eligible for 100% free passage on firm basis on Indian Airlines on reciprocal basis |                             |   |

#### **Indian Airlines**

|  | Free | Concessional<br>(95%) |
|--|------|-----------------------|
| Retired employees on completion of 15 years of service   | 01   | 02                    |
| Retired after 20 years of service  | 01   | 03                    |
| Retired after 25 years of service  | 02   | 04                    |
| Retired Deputy GMs/GMs/Directors (Irrespective of length of service and on subject to load basis) and Deputy MDs and above (on firm basis) | 02   | 04                    |

Air passage entitlement to retired employees is subject to seat availability basis (except for Deputy GM level and above in Air India and Deputy MDs and above level officers in Indian Airlines). As such, there is

practically no revenue dilution to the company on this account.

(d) and (e) The grant of passages is regulated

under the Air India Employees' Passage Regulations, 1987 which lays down the number of passages to be granted to the employees as per the length of service, etc. Air India Employees Passage Regulations were issued in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 45 of the Air Corporations Act, 1953 with the previous approval of the Board and the Government.

The Board of Directors of Indian Airlines had in their meetings held on 27-06-1994 and 18-06-1997 considered and approved respectively proposals relating to passage facility to retired employees and passage facility for Dy. GM, GM and Director level officers. The Ministry of Civil Aviation, vide their letter dated 16th December, 1996 had issued Presidential Directives for free passages to the Directors on the Board of Air India and Indian Airlines.

[Translation]

#### **Upgradation of Mirage-2000**

5830. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:

SHRI KIREN RIJJU:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is drawing up a scheme for the upgradation of the Mirage-2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has signed agreement with any country for the purpose; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) Plans for upgradation of Mirage 2000 aircraft have not been finalized.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

#### **Dahej-Uran Gas Pipeline**

5831. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether GAIL (India) Ltd. has decided to set up Spread II of Dahej-Uran Pipe Line connecting Jalalpur, Gujarat to Bhoirpada (Maharashtra) covering distance of 147 kms at a cost of Rs. 29 billion;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the work is likely to be started; and

(d) the quantity of gas likely to be available to Gujarat and other States from the venture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. GAIL is setting up Spread-II of the Dahej-Uran pipeline (DUPL) connecting Jalalpur and Gujarat to Bhoirpada in Maharashtra, covering a distance of 147 kms. The pipeline will supply about 12MMSCMD regasified LNG to various consumers located on pipeline route. As on 10-05-2007, 99% pipe lowering has been completed.

#### **Nehru Memorial Museum and Library**

5832. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any proposal to revamp and to modernise Nehru Memorial Museum and Library (NMML);

(b) if, so, the details and the amount allocated for the same;

(c) the time by which it is likely to be renovated and modernised;

(d) whether there is also proposal to set up more libraries in the country for the benefit of children, students and research scholars; and



(e) if so, the details thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI):** (a) Yes, Sir. We are working on modalities for modernisation of NMML.

(b) and (c) In addition to the normal plan allocation of Rs 350 lakhs for the year 2007-08, the Finance Minister in the Budget Speech for 2007-08 has announced a grant of Rs 20 crores. The details and modalities are required to be worked out. As such, the exact time schedule by which the modernisation of Nehru Memorial Museum and Library is likely to be completed cannot be specified.

(d) and (e) There is no Proposal/Scheme for setting up of libraries in the country. However, Raja Rammohan Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) has a Scheme for establishment of children's corner in the existing public Libraries. Under this Scheme an amount of up to Rs. 1.50 lakhs is granted to each library for setting up of RRRLF Children's Corner.

#### **Dhruv Helicopters**

**5833. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM:** Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state: .

(a) whether the advanced light helicopter, Dhruv was stopped from flying few years ago;

(b) if so, reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited proposes to bring back Dhruv helicopters in the skies;

(d) if so, the details thereof and salient features thereof; and

(e) the time by which it is proposed to be re-introduced for flying?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (RAOINDERJIT SINGH):** (a) and (b) Owing to an incident of forced landing of a Dhruv helicopter in November, 2005 due to failure of its tail rotor blade, Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) advised its customers to withhold flying of Dhruv helicopters till the

cause of the incident is investigated by a Board of Inquiry (BoI).

(c) to (e) The tail rotor blades of all the Dhruv helicopters delivered to the Indian Armed forces till the date of incident have been replaced by HAL as per the recommendations of the BoI. The helicopters have started flying since February, 2006.

#### **Higher Education to SC/ST Students**

**5834. SHRI K.S. RAO:** Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes (SC/ST) students admitted to private and professional institutions for higher studies and amount of tuition fees reimbursed each year during the last three years;

(b) the details of the central scheme to fund post-matric scholarships for higher education in private institutions;

(c) whether the Government proposes to continue fully funding of higher education to SC/ST students particularly for technical education in private professional institutions to help them get required qualifications for employment; and

(d) If so, the details thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN):** (a) to (d) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry of Tribal Affairs are implementing a centrally sponsored scheme of Post Matric scholarships for the SC and ST students respectively. Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided for pursuing post matriculation recognized courses in recognized institutions. The details are maintained by concerned State Governments/UT administrations.

In case of SC students the scholarship includes full reimbursement of compulsory non-refundable fee. However, in case of ST students, the reimbursement of

tuition fees is same as for students in Government institutions for comparable courses.

[Translation]

#### **Railway Tracks In Uttar Pradesh**

5835. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the length of railway tracks proposed to be laid in Uttar Pradesh during the current financial year along

with the locations thereof; and

(b) the details of the railway tracks proposed to be converted into broad gauge in Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The details of section and length of railway tracks proposed to be laid under new line and doubling projects falling fully/partly in the State of Uttar Pradesh during the current financial year are given as under:—

| Sl. No. | Plan Head | Name of project                                  | Name of section                        | Km targeted during 2007-08 |
|---------|-----------|--|--|----------------------------|
| 1.      | NL        | Lalitpur-Satna and Rewa-Singrauli                | Mahoba-Khajuraho                       | 65                         |
| 2.      | NL        | Hathua-Bhatni                                    | Hathua-Bathua Bazar                    | 22                         |
| 3.      | DL        | Kanpur-Panki 3rd line                            | Kanpur-Panki 3rd line                  | 9                          |
| 4.      | DL        | Bhimsen-Juhi                                     | Bhimsen-Juhi                           | 14                         |
| 5.      | DL        | Sahjanwa-Munderva                                | Sahjanwa-Khalilabad                    | 17                         |
| 6.      | DL        | Gorakhpur-Sahjanwa                               | Domingarh-Sahjanwa                     | 11                         |
| 7.      | DL        | Gorakhpur-Baitalpur                              | Gorakhpur-Baitalpur                    | 34                         |
| 8.      | DL        | Babhnai-Mankapur patch                           | Babhnai-Mankapur patch                 | 30                         |
| 9.      | DL        | Zafrabad-Utraitia                                | Sarai Harku-Sri Krishnanagar           | 8                          |
| 10.     | DL        | Utraitia-Chalidrauli and Sultanpur-Bandhua Kalan | Anupganj-Chandrauli                    | 13                         |
| 11.     | DL        | Sahibabad-Anand Vihar 3rd and 4th line           | Sahibabad-Anand Vihar 3rd and 4th line | 4                          |

(b) The details of gauge conversion projects falling fully/partly in the State of Uttar Pradesh are given as under:—

| Sl. No. | Plan Head | Name of project                                     | Name of section  | Km targeted during 2007-08 |
|---------|-----------|---|------------------|----------------------------|
| 1.      | GC        | Kaptanganj-Thawe-Siwan-Chhapra                      | Kaptanganj-Thawe | 100                        |
| 2.      | GC        | Kanpur-Kasganj-Mathura and Kasganj-Bareilly-Lalkuan | Kasganj-Mathura  | 107                        |

**Ancient Civilization of the Baida in Dwarka**

5836. SHRI RAGHUVeer SINGH KOSHAL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ruins of the ancient civilization of the Baida Dwarka located at the sea shore in the State of Gujarat have been found;

(b) if so, the details of the ruins out of the above that have been found into and outside of the sea;

(c) whether the work pertaining to the preservation, research as well as other work related thereto have been carried out from the archaeological point of view with regard to the above; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) The National Institute of Oceanography, (NIO) Goa had carried out archaeological excavations on the island of Bet (Baida) Dwarka from December 2001 to January 2002.

These excavations revealed habitation datable to proto-historic period followed by historic period. Important finds from the proto-historic period include a copper fishhook, antimony rod, fragments of shell bangles and pottery (plain and painted). Carbon 14 and Thermoluminescence dating indicate a time bracket for proto-historic habitation between 1600-1400 BC.

| Period             | Domestic | Foreign | Total    |
|--------------------|----------|---------|----------|
| January-April 2006 | 118644   | 6128    | 124772   |
| January-April 2007 | 68745    | 7361    | 76106    |
| % Change           | (- )42.1 | +20.1   | (- )39.0 |

In view of the 20% growth in foreign tourist visits to Srinagar during January-April 2007 in comparison to the figures for the corresponding period of the year 2006, possible loss of foreign exchange is not expected.

(c) Attractive tourist packages are offered by the

[English]

**Tourist Arrival in Jammu and Kashmir**

5837. SHRI MILIND DEORA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Jammu and Kashmir, touted as 'Switzerland of the East' is witnessing a drop of about 40% in the number of tourist visiting Srinagar as compared to last year;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the loss of foreign exchange suffered on this account;

(c) to what extent lack of attractive tourist packages have been responsible apart from fragile security situation prevailing in Jammu and Kashmir; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to attract the tourists both (domestic as well as foreign) to Jammu and Kashmir?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) The total number of tourist visits, domestic and foreign taken together, to Srinagar during January-April 2007 has decreased by 39% as compared to the corresponding period of 2006. While the number of domestic tourist visits has decreased, that of foreign tourist visits has increased. The figures are given below:—

private sector and the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation (JKTDC). Lack of such packages is not perceived as the reason for decline in number of tourists.

(d) The Department of Tourism, Government of

Jammu and Kashmir is undertaking a number of activities to motivate tourists to visit the State, which include:

- Participation in various travel marts and organization of Road Shows in different cities across India
- Participation as Partner State in SATTE 2007 held in New Delhi from 19th-22nd April, 2007
- Participation in the following International Marts—
  - World Trade Mart London: 6-9 November, 2006
  - ITB, Berlin: 9-12 March, 2007
  - Arabian Travel Mart Dubai: 1-4 May, 2007
  - Bahrain International Travel Expo: 7-10 May, 2007
- Undertaking publicity campaigns through electronic and print media (both National and International)
- Earmarking of 50 tourist villages in the State under Rural Tourism Scheme of Govt. of India for development
- Creation of Infrastructures of the following places under Major Destination Development Scheme of Government of India:
  - Gateway of Kashmir (Qazigund)
  - Eid-gal (Srinagar)
  - Hassan Villa (Srinagar)
  - Mattan and Kheer Bhawani Shrine (Kashmir)
  - Mubarak Mandi Akhnoor, Shiv Khori (Jammu)
- Creation of tourism facilities at a number of other places with funding from the State Plan and the 12th Finance Commission Awards

- Setting up of Golf Course at Sidhra-Jammu, Pahalgam, Gulmarg in Kashmir under Centrally sponsored scheme
- Promotion of Paragliding, Skating and Trekking in the State.

#### Tourism in NER

5838. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the tourist spots developed in the North East Region during the Tenth Plan period State-wise indicating the number of foreign as well as domestic tourist visited there;

(b) the details of various ongoing projects taken up by the Ministry in the North East Region under 10 per cent budgetary provision showing total outlay, amount sanctioned, unutilized and achievement made during Tenth Plan period, State-wise and proposed projects during 2007-08 along with target set for each project;

(c) the thrust area proposed for Eleventh Plan period;

(d) the details of new schemes, if any, proposed to be launched in the region during Eleventh Plan period; and

(e) the festivals being funded by the Ministry, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (e) A list of the projects sanctioned for the North East Region during the Tenth Plan period indicating the amount sanctioned and amount released, and also the number of domestic and foreign tourist arrivals is enclosed as Statement-I.

A Statement-II indicating the amount of total Plan outlay for the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, amount of 10% of the total outlay earmarked for NER, and amount sanctioned/amount released for NER and amount utilized by State Governments during the Tenth Plan period is enclosed.

The festivals funded by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, during the year 2006-07 State-wise are indicated in the enclosed Statement-III.

Development and promotion of tourism in the North East Region will continue in the XIth Plan period as per the approved schemes.

**Statement-I**

*The projects approved for the North East Region during the 10th Plan period*

(Rs. in lakh)

| Sl. No.                  | Name of Project   | Amount sanctioned | Amount released |
|--------------------------|---|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1                        | 2   | 3                 | 4               |
| <b>Arunachal Pradesh</b> |   |                   |                 |
| 1.                       | Bhalukpong-Tawang-Tourist Circuit   | 638.00            | 500.00          |
| 2.                       | Way side amenities at Karyangsha  | 47.54             | 47.54           |
| 3.                       | Ganganagar Lake   | 244.06            | 244.06          |
| 4.                       | Tourist Lodge at Tawang   | 100.00            | 100.00          |
| 5.                       | Guest way side amenities on the bank of Sabansiri River at Kuporji                                | 65.40             | 65.40           |
| 6.                       | Development of Gangalake at Itanagar  | 243.00            | 243.00          |
| 7.                       | Eco-tourist Project in Arunachal Pradesh  | 83.29             | 66.00           |
| 8.                       | Destination Development of Along, West Siang  | 266.00            | 213.00          |
| 9.                       | Development of Zeminthang   | 384.00            | 307.20          |
| 10.                      | Development of Hotspring at Jia at Lower Dibang Valley  | 262.00            | 209.00          |
| 11.                      | Development of Gaera Lake at Taraso, Papumpare Distt.   | 373.00            | 298.00          |
| 12.                      | Tourist Circuit of Dibrugarh-Passighat-Daying Ering Wildlife Sanctuary                            | 299.00            | 239.20          |
| 13.                      | Integrated Development of Siang Circuit   | 778.04            | 623.00          |
| 14.                      | Multipurpose Hall and Passighat/Tourist Lodge at Deomali/ Wayside Amenities at Deomali Entry Gate | 161.00            | 128.80          |
| 15.                      | Preservation of Heritage Site (stone rampart) at Yabgo, Dambuk, Lower Dibang Valley               | 283.22            | 226.58          |

| 1              | 2  | 3      | 4      |
|----------------|--|--------|--------|
| 16.            | Tourist Circuit of Dirak-Wakro-Tezu-Havuliang-Walong                         | 772.28 | 617.80 |
| 17.            | Construction of Tourist Complex at Parsusam Kund                             | 462.68 | 370.15 |
| 18.            | Tourist Resort at Hollangi in Papumpare                                      | 167.14 | 133.71 |
| <b>Assam</b>   |  |        |        |
| 1.             | Camping Site at Kohora   | 142.00 | 142.00 |
| 2.             | Heritage and Eco-tourist Resort at Majuli                                    | 382.25 | 325.21 |
| 3.             | Ethnic Village at Bhalukpong   | 45.00  | 45.00  |
| 4.             | Riverfront Development along Brahmaputra River                               | 30.00  | 30.00  |
| 5.             | Pilgrim facilities at Kamakhya   | 80.00  | 64.00  |
| 6.             | Signages   | 25.00  | 25.00  |
| 7.             | Tourist Complex at Agartoli Range, Kaziranga                                 | 158.00 | 158.00 |
| 8.             | Development around Kamakhya Temple   | 151.27 | 151.27 |
| 9.             | Tourist Reception Centre, Guwahati   | 384.00 | 284.00 |
| 10.            | Tourist Circuit in Assam   | 437.75 | 350.00 |
| 11.            | Adventure Tourist in Kaziranga   | 44.95  | 35.90  |
| 12.            | Tourist Circuit of Manas-Guwahati-Kaziranga                                  | 781.00 | 624.80 |
| 13.            | Eco-tourist Development at Kokrajhar, Assam                                  | 480.00 | 368.00 |
| 14.            | North East Circuit in Assam  | 280.00 | 224.00 |
| 15.            | Tourist Circuit of Dhubri-Goalpara-Guwahati-Silchar-Karimganj                | 432.28 | 345.82 |
| 16.            | Convention Centre and Wellness Centre in Hotel Brahmaputra Ashok             | 454.28 | 363.42 |
| 17.            | Kamakhya and Sattelite Pilgrimage Township of Hajo                           | 436.54 | 218.27 |
| 18.            | Development of Shibsagar   | 369.05 | 295.24 |
| 19.            | Tourist Circuit of Orang-Tezpur-Bhalukpong-Biswanath-Chairali-Gohpur Circuit | 798.00 | 619.87 |
| 20.            | Brahmaputra Riverfront and Cruise vessel                                     | 365.52 | 292.41 |
| <b>Manipur</b> |  |        |        |
| 1.             | Improvement of the surroundings of INA Complex at Moirang                    | 82.44  | 66.22  |

| 1                | 2   | 3      | 4      |
|------------------|---|--------|--------|
| 2.               | Tourist Home at Sandra  | 75.50  | 75.50  |
| 3.               | Tourist Destination at Imphal   | 418.00 | 334.00 |
| 4.               | WEco-tourist Park at Imphal   | 345.29 | 172.64 |
| <b>Meghalaya</b> |   |        |        |
| 1.               | Cottages in Nongkhnun Island  | 42.40  | 12.70  |
| 2.               | Suspension Bridge over Weinia falls, Sonkhai                                | 10.89  | 3.27   |
| 3.               | Boathouse Cafeteria and other facilities in Lumponding Island at Umiam      | 17.06  | 9.43   |
| 4.               | Destination Nongkhrum   | 70.85  | 21.20  |
| 5.               | Development of Tourist Circuit  | 674.15 | 576.59 |
| 6.               | Development of Barapani   | 289.15 | 231.32 |
| 7.               | Development of Tourist Destination at Tura                                  | 487.00 | 389.60 |
| 8.               | Circuit development of Williamnagar-jakaren-Natlang-Jowai, Meghalaya        | 800.00 | 640.00 |
| <b>Mizoram</b>   |   |        |        |
| 1.               | Tourist Lodge at Khamrang   | 31.00  | 31.00  |
| 2.               | Tourist Lodge at Zokhawthar   | 50.00  | 50.00  |
| 3.               | Tourist Lodge at Sakawrdai  | 50.00  | 50.00  |
| 4.               | Tourism Development at Five Places (Saichho, Tlabung, Kanhunun, Berawtiang) | 341.00 | 272.50 |
| 5.               | Tourist Resort at Hmulfang  | 195.85 | 156.67 |
| 6.               | Development of Tourist Destination in Chanphai                              | 442.35 | 353.88 |
| 7.               | Tourist circuit in Aizawl Chhahitiang-Serchhip-Hnabthial-Lunglei            | 634.00 | 507.20 |
| 8.               | Tourist Circuit in Northern part of Mizoram                                 | 783.92 | 627.00 |
| 9.               | Destination development in the state of Mizoram                             | 341.00 | 239.00 |
| 10.              | Tourist Destination at Reiek and Berawtiang in Aizawl                       | 478.49 | 383.59 |
| 11.              | Tourist Destination at Chaitih tiang  | 499.00 | 399.00 |

| 1               | 2  | 3      | 4      |
|-----------------|--|--------|--------|
| 12.             | Development of Chatlang in Aizwal  | 487.45 | 390.00 |
| 13.             | Tourist Circuit-Keitumi-N, Vanlaiphai-East-Zikhathan-Hnahlan             | 782.78 | 601.85 |
| 14.             | Tourist Circuit at Hrqngchalkawti-Twipul-Lawngtlai-Saiha-Outhy-aniaithai | 788.10 | 589.11 |
| <b>Nagaland</b> |  |        |        |
| 1.              | Green Village Plant at Khonoma   | 300.00 | 300.00 |
| 2.              | Development of Mt. Paunna Range  | 250.00 | 250.00 |
| 3.              | Development of Toupheema Village   | 156.00 | 156.00 |
| 4.              | Development of naga Heritage Complex                                     | 300.00 | 300.00 |
| 5.              | Eco Tourism Conv. Centre Phipheema                                       | 351.00 | 351.00 |
| 6.              | Destination Development of Pfutsero                                      | 439.24 | 439.24 |
| 7.              | Rural Tourism under PMS package  | 550.00 | 550.00 |
| 8.              | Development of tourist Circuit at six places in Nagaland                 | 786.50 | 613.20 |
| 9.              | Renovation of Existing Tourist Lodge, Kohima                             | 58.95  | 58.95  |
| 10.             | Development of Tourist Resort at Doyang (Wokha).                         | 64.00  | 64.00  |
| 11.             | Development of Rural Tourist project in Nagaland                         | 250.00 | 250.00 |
| 12.             | Development at Zunheboto Satoi Range                                     | 447.37 | 357.89 |
| 13.             | Tourism Circuit of Mokokchung-Longleng and Mon.                          | 747.95 | 598.36 |
| 14.             | Tourism Hub in Nagaland  | 209.65 | 209.65 |
| 15.             | Tourist Circuit of Zunheboto-Tyensang Kiphiri                            | 678.66 | 542.93 |
| 16.             | Development of Aizuto, Zunheboto District                                | 438.94 | 351.17 |
| 17.             | Tourist Travel Destination Tupheema, Kohima                              | 464.72 | 371.77 |
| 18.             | Tourist Circuit of Wokha-Nui Land-Jalukie-Peren                          | 728.00 | 566.64 |
| <b>Sikkim</b>   |  |        |        |
| 1.              | Observatory Tower Tashi Point  | 40.00  | 32.00  |
| 2.              | Tourist Information Centre at Iichen                                     | 8.87   | 8.87   |
| 3.              | Development of Trekking Trail to Tendong                                 | 18.84  | 7.22   |



| 1              | 2  | 3      | 4      |
|----------------|--|--------|--------|
| 4.             | Tourist Infrastructure at Rumtek   | 74.00  | 74.00  |
| 5.             | Flower Show Pavilion at Gangtok  | 32.00  | 32.00  |
| 6.             | Tourist Lodge at Chopta Valley   | 63.21  | 63.21  |
| 7.             | Tourist Infrastructure at Durpenyara at Chakung  | 82.30  | 82.30  |
| 8.             | Tourist Lodge at Rangpo  | 20.00  | 20.00  |
| 9.             | Development of Trekking Routes in Sikkim   | 456.55 | 365.00 |
| 10.            | Construction of Eco and Adventure Centre Chemchi   | 494.00 | 395.00 |
| 11.            | Development of Buddhist Circuit at Tashingding   | 181.00 | 144.80 |
| 12.            | Circuit Development of West Sikkim   | 396.00 | 316.00 |
| 13.            | Development of Tourist Circuit in East Sikkim  | 355.00 | 284.00 |
| 14.            | Destination Development Programme at Soreng, West Sikkim                                     | 436.17 | 348.94 |
| 15.            | Tourist Trekking Trails and other Tourism Infrastructure under Sang-Martam in East Sikkim    | 418.42 | 334.73 |
| 16.            | Tourist Spots Development Schemes for Rakdong, Tintek Belt in East Sikkim                    | 678.30 | 542.64 |
| 17.            | Development of Lepcha Heritage Centre  | 171.22 | 136.97 |
| 18.            | Integrated Development of Pilgrimage Tourism and other Infrastructure at Sang in East Sikkim | 375.55 | 300.40 |
| 19.            | Destination Development Programme Saramsa  | 452.55 | 362.04 |
| 20.            | Development of the Trekking Trail from Yangyang Dhappar to Bhallay Dunga                     | 115.07 | 92.00  |
| 21.            | Development of Tourist Infrastructure at Aritar, Phodong                                     | 145.17 | 99.20  |
| 22.            | Beautification and other tourist infrastructure at Tsomgo under Destination Development      | 384.64 | 307.71 |
| 23.            | Development of Community Park at Bojoy and Water Garden at Hee Pui                           | 441.81 | 9.00   |
| <b>Tripura</b> |  |        |        |
| 1.             | Development Project at Tripura   | 81.96  | 25.00  |
| 2.             | Tourist Lodge, Eco-Park MBB College  | 276.00 | 80.00  |

| 1  | 2  | 3      | 4      |
|----|--|--------|--------|
| 3. | Development of Matabari, Udaipur (N.E. Circuit)      | 37.21  | 11.16  |
| 4. | Integrated Development of West North Tripura Circuit | 252.33 | 202.00 |
| 5. | Destination Development of Agartala                  | 459.00 | 367.00 |
| 6. | Destination Development at Chaturdesh Devtabari      | 274.00 | 82.20  |

*Tourist Arrivals to the North East States*

| State/UT          | 2002     |         | 2003     |         | 2004     |         | 2005     |         |
|-------------------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|----------|---------|
|                   | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign | Domestic | Foreign |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 4372     | 187     | 2195     | 123     | 4740     | 269     | 3005     | 289     |
| Assam             | 1953915  | 6409    | 2156675  | 6610    | 2288093  | 7285    | 2467652  | 10782   |
| Manipur           | 89633    | 221     | 92923    | 257     | 93476    | 249     | 94299    | 316     |
| Meghalaya         | 268609   | 3146    | 371953   | 6304    | 433495   | 12407   | 375901   | 5099    |
| Mizoram           | 29417    | 259     | 35129    | 279     | 38598    | 326     | 44715    | 273     |
| Nagaland          | 14263    | 657     | 5605     | 743     | 10056    | 1084    | 17470    | 883     |
| Sikkim            | 159342   | 8566    | 179661   | 11966   | 230719   | 14646   | 251744   | 16523   |
| Tripura           | 260586   | 2602    | 257331   | 3196    | 260907   | 3171    | 216330   | 2677    |

*Statement-II*

*Total outlay of Ministry of Tourism, 10% of outlay earmarked for North East Region and amount sanctioned for NER during the 10th Plan period*

(Rs. in lakhs)

| Sl. No. | Year                        | 2002-03  | 2003-04  | 2004-05  | 2005-06  | 2006-07  |
|---------|-----------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1.      | Total Outlay of MOT         | 25000.00 | 35000.00 | 50000.00 | 78600.00 | 83000.00 |
| 2.      | 10% of total outlay for NER | 2500.00  | 3500.00  | 5000.00  | 7900.00  | 8300.00  |
| 3.      | Amount sanctioned for NER   | 1807.30  | 4310.68  | 6979.10  | 13230.00 | 14570.50 |

*State-wise break up of the amount sanctioned during Xth Plan Period.*

(Rs. in lakh)

| State/UT          | 2002-03           |                 |                                      | 2003-2004         |                 |                                      |
|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|
|                   | Amount Sanctioned | Amount Released | Amount Utilized by State Governments | Amount Sanctioned | Amount Released | Amount Utilized by State Governments |
| Assam             | 721.30            | 544.81          | 500.00                               | 318.60            | 316.70          | 316.70                               |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 100.20            | 78.50           | 78.50                                | 1044.60           | 904.60          | 900.00                               |
| Manipur           | 5.24              | 2.62            | 262.00                               | 82.44             | 66.22           | 82.44                                |
| Meghalaya         | 193.20            | 72.60           | 72.00                                | 40.22             | 24.92           | 24.92                                |
| Mizoram           | 141.16            | 140.82          | 141.16                               | 567.70            | 457.17          | 500.00                               |
| Nagaland          | 320.50            | 315.28          | 320.50                               | 721.00            | 721.00          | 721.00                               |
| Sikkim            | 367.10            | 345.96          | 345.00                               | 1151.09           | 931.00          | 1151.09                              |
| Tripura           | 171.21            | 54.90           | 171.21                               | 405.75            | 125.74          | 405.75                               |

| State/UT          | 2004-05           |         |                     |         | 2005-06           |         |                 |         | 2006-07           |   |                 |   |
|-------------------|-------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|-------------------|---------|-----------------|---------|-------------------|---|-----------------|---|
|                   | Amount Sanctioned |         | Amount Released     |         | Amount Sanctioned |         | Amount Released |         | Amount Sanctioned |   | Amount Released |   |
|                   |                   |         | by State Government |         |                   |         |                 |         |                   |   |                 |   |
| Assam             | 971.03            | 753.42  | 699.25              | 2125.00 | 1706.69           | 976.88  | 2453.39         | 1813.21 | —                 | — | —               | — |
| Arunachal Pradesh | 1041.69           | 894.60  | 801.05              | 2013.56 | 1620.94           | 1108.93 | 1887.80         | 1497.24 | —                 | — | —               | — |
| Manipur           | 78.10             | 77.45   | 48.45               | 57.30   | 47.34             | 32.18   | 939.35          | 647.48  | —                 | — | —               | — |
| Meghalaya         | 994.98            | 835.91  | 804.19              | 05.00   | 04.00             | 4.00    | 1435.29         | 1147.93 | —                 | — | —               | — |
| Mizoram           | 1101.37           | 884.60  | 798.08              | 1614.41 | 1259.59           | 918.05  | 2613.38         | 2040.80 | —                 | — | —               | — |
| Nagaland          | 2275.69           | 2115.39 | 2000.17             | 1733.97 | 1494.90           | 1411.90 | 2340.32         | 1862.51 | —                 | — | —               | — |
| Sikkim            | 655.81            | 524.33  | 491.81              | 2712.89 | 2174.31           | 2000.00 | 2609.42         | 1647.77 | —                 | — | —               | — |
| Tripura           | 30.00             | 24.00   | 23.19               | 711.33  | 569.00            | 428.11  | 291.27          | 96.01   | —                 | — | —               | — |

\*\*Utilization Certificate are not yet due for the year 2006-07.

**Statement-III**

*Name of Festivals which have been funded by  
Ministry of Tourism, Government of India  
during 2006-07*

**ARUNUACHAL PRADESH:**

1. Dree Festival, 2 Buddha Mahotsava, 3. Siang River Festival, 4. Mopin/Nyokum festival.

**ASSAM:**

1. Rangoli Bihu festival, 2. Tea Tourism festival, 3. Elephant festival, 4. Dehing Patkai festival.

**MANIPUR:**

1. Winter Tourism festival, 2. Kut festival, 3. Lui-Ngai-Ni festival, 4. Manipur Tourism festival.

**MEGHALAYA:**

1. Wangla Dance festival, 2. Autumn festival, 3. Winter festival.

**MIZORAM:**

1. Chapchar Kut festival, 2. Thalfavang Kut festival, 3. Anthurium festival.

**NAGALAND:**

1. Hornbill festival, 2. Ahuna festival, 3. Naga Nite Festival, 4. Aoling festival.

**SIKKIM:**

1. Namchi Mahotsava, 2. Jorethang Maghey Mela, 3. Gangtok Winter festival, 4. Mangan Music festival.

**TRIPURA:**

1. Jampui Hill festival, 2. Neermahal Tourism festival, 3. North East Tourism festival.

**Allotment of Seat Number of Passengers**

5839. SHRI JASHUBHAI DHANABHAI BARAD:

SHRI SURESH PRABHAKAR PRABHU:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it has come to the notice of DGCA that some budget carriers overbooking passengers;

(b) if so, the details of such airlines;

(c) whether now DGCA made it mandatory for airlines to allot row number and seat number for each passengers;

(d) if so, whether some airlines are not followed the same; and

(e) if so, the details with the action taken against such airlines?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Overbooking of flights is an accepted practice in the airline industry worldwide to avoid loss of revenue due to last minutes cancellations and no shows.

(c) to (e) Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has issued Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) instructing the scheduled airlines to issue row and seat numbers to all passengers at all stations, which should be indicated on their boarding passes.

The above Civil Aviation Requirement is being implemented by the airlines.

[Translation]

**Information System at Delhi Airport**

5840. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the information system available at different places for the convenience of the passengers at Delhi International and domestic airport;

(b) whether the exchange of information system at Delhi Airport to other airports in the country is not upto the modern technology;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Flight information display boards and monitors are provided at various locations in the terminals of Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi. These boards and monitors are updated by officials of Delhi International Airport Private Limited on the basis of information received from Airlines and the Air Traffic Management Department. An information counter is also located at the International arrivals side. Further, there is an office of Airport Manager which can be accessed at each terminal, from city side as well as from inside the terminal. This office works round the clock and provides the requisite information.

(b) State-of-art computer based Automatic Message Switching System (AMSS) has been installed for exchange of Air Traffic Services (ATS) messages between Delhi Airport and other airports in the country. High speed data circuits on optical fibre media with built in redundancy have been provided. Direct Speech Circuits (DSC) have also been provided between Delhi Air Traffic Control and other stations as per the network.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[English]

#### **Non Payment of Salaries**

5841. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that a large number of employees working with National Mission for Manuscripts are not being paid their salaries;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has issued any instruction to the banker to stop making payment of salaries of these employees; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) There

was some delay in payment of salaries of the employees of the National Mission for Manuscripts for the month of February, 2007, due to temporary problem in operation of the bank account of the Mission. However, the problem was subsequently sorted out and the salaries of the employees for the month of February, 2007, were paid on 10th March, 2007.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

#### **Disruption in Flights**

5842. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the international flights were disrupted and faced near collision situation during the recently concluded test of Agni ITI missiles;

(b) if so, whether the Government has conducted any enquiry into the incident to find out the reasons;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the action taken against the guilty persons; and

(e) the measures taken/proposed to be taken to stop such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Advance notice of Agni III launch by India was sent to affected countries by Airports Authority of India (AAI) as per international norms through dedicated channels. AAI issued Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) on 09-04-2007 closing the affected airspace. The NOTAM was distributed to all airlines and all other affected countries as per standard distribution list. No near collision situation was reported by any aircraft.

(b) The launch of Agni III was done as per proper procedure and hence no investigation was called for.

(c) to (e) Do not arise.

[Translation]

### Development of Camp Sites

5843. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is running any scheme for the development of camp sites particularly for domestic tourists with low budget;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the pattern of funding this scheme; and

(d) the details of funds allocated/released under the said scheme, State-wise during the last three years and current year?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) There

is no specific and exclusive scheme for development of camp sites. However, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, extends financial assistance to the State Governments/UT Administrations for tourism related projects including camp sites as a component which are identified in consultation with them under schemes for Integrated Development of Tourist Circuits, Product/Infrastructure Development of Destinations.

(c) Ministry of Tourism, Government of India provides 80% of the total project cost to the State Governments/UT Administrations as first installment to start the work. Balance 20% is released in shape of reimbursement after obtaining Utilization/Completion certificates from them. The entire amount is in the form of grant.

(d) The list of tourism projects with camp sites as a component sanctioned during the last three years and current year is enclosed as Statement.

### Statement

#### *Details of Projects Sanctioned for Camping Sites During the Years 2004-05, 2005-06, 2006-07 and 2007-08*

(Rs. in lakh)

| Year    | Name of State | Name of Projects   | Amount sanctioned |
|---------|---------------|--|-------------------|
| 1       | 2             | 3  | 4                 |
| 2004-05 | Karnataka     | Development of Chicmagalore Wildemess Bhadra for Rs.202.48 lakh Component: camping equipment | 8.00              |
|         | Rajasthan     | Integrated Development of Tourist Circuit of Hadoti Region for Rs. 725.10 lakh               |                   |
|         |               | Component: Camping Site at Gawri Talab   | 65.96             |
|         |               | <b>Total</b>   | <b>73.96</b>      |
| 2005-06 | Gujarat       | Dinosaur Fossil Park at Balasinor for Rs.345.00 lakh   |                   |
|         |               | Component-Camping site/log Huts  | 45.00             |

| 1       | 2                | 3  | 4             |
|---------|------------------|--|---------------|
|         | Himachal Pradesh | Integrated Development of Mandi-Bilaspur Circuit for Rs. 800.00 lakh<br>Component: Camping facilities at Barot   | 10.00         |
|         | Maharashtra      | Integrated Development of Konkan Riviera Circuit for RS. 685.87 lakh<br>Components:  |               |
|         |                  | (a) Providing and installing Royale Tent Resort and supporting Amenities at Erangal Rs. 191.71 lakh  | 191.71        |
|         |                  | (b) Providing Royale Tent Resort at Dhamapur   | 87.75         |
|         |                  | (c) Providing and installing Roayale Tent Resort at Uphadanda  | 87.75         |
|         |                  | (d) Providing and installing 20 Royale Tents at Akhasi Nagaon  | 72.96         |
|         | Orissa           | Development of Chilka Lake as a Tourist Destination for Rs. 389.05 lakh<br>Component: Camping sites  | 188.23        |
|         | Rajasthan        | Integrated Development of Pushkar as Tourist Destination for Rs. 434.04 lakh<br>Component: New Camping Site at Pushkar   | 160.13        |
|         | Uttar Pradesh    | Development of Mirzapur-Chunar-Robertsganj under Vindhya Tourist Circuit for Rs. 800.00 lakh<br>Component: Camping sites at Gothani, Chatarwar and Kudari Devi and purchase of camping equipment | 21.00         |
|         | Uttarakhand      | Development of Hemkunt Sahib-Ghangharia-Valley of Flowers Circuit, Distt. Chamoli for Rs. 653.54 lakh<br>Component: Camping site (Ghangharia-Kakbhushandi)                                       | 35.00         |
|         |                  | Development of Nainital-Almora-Ranikhet Tourist Circuit for Rs. 697.51 lakh<br>Component: Jungle Camp at Manila  | 11.00         |
|         |                  | <b>Total</b>   | <b>910.53</b> |
| 2006-07 | Chattisgarh      | Infrastructure and Destination Development of Rajmargah (Amarkantak) for Rs. 275.73<br>Component: Camping Site-Toilet facilities and fencing   | 5.00          |
|         | Orissa           | Integrated Development of Koraput Circuit for Rs. 692.00 lakh<br>Component: Trekking Base Camp at Deomali  | 10.00         |



| 1       | 2             | 3  | 4             |
|---------|---------------|--|---------------|
|         | Punjab        | Integrated Development of Rupnagar (Ropar) as a Tourist Destination for Rs. 331.27 lakh                              |               |
|         |               | Component: Nursery of forest camping site  | 44.46         |
|         | Uttarakhand   | Development of Gangotri (Distt. Uttarkashi) as Tourist Destination for Rs. 481.42 lakh                               |               |
|         |               | Component: Camping at Chirbasa   | 5.00          |
|         |               | Development of Kailash Mansarovar Yatra Route and improving of Camping sites and facilities as a Tourist Destination | 371.15        |
|         |               | <b>Total</b>   | <b>435.61</b> |
| 2007-08 | Uttar Pradesh | Rural Tourism Site at Village Bhaguwala, Distt. Saharanpur for Rs. 50.00 lakh  |               |
|         |               | Component: Camp sites  | 4.00          |
|         |               | <b>Total</b>   | <b>4.00</b>   |

*[English]**[Translation]*

**Encroachments in Cantonments in  
Uttar Pradesh**

5844. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that in some Cantonments particularly in Uttar Pradesh, several outsiders have encroached upon the areas and operating with the help of ISI agents;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to check such encroachments and delink the ISI agents; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) There is no information available on linkages between the ISI and people who have encroached in some Cantonments, particularly in Uttar Pradesh.

**Progress Report for Welfare of  
SCs/STs and Minorities**

5845. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:  
SHRI HEMMAL MURMU:

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

(a) whether different Ministries and departments/organisations thereunder forward periodical progress report to the Government in regard to progress of the schemes meant for welfare of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/minorities besides recruitment thereof; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) The Ministries/Departments forward its monthly progress reports on welfare schemes relating to Scheduled Castes/

Scheduled Tribes regarding the implementation of Twenty Point Programme to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

[English]

#### **Tilting of Minarets and Towers**

5846. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some of the minarets and towers in the centrally protected monuments in the country are reported to be tilting;

(b) if so, whether any study has been conducted in this regard;

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

(d) the preventive measures taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) There is no information that the minarets and towers of any of the protected monuments are tilting. Archaeological Survey of India has taken up a detailed study on the stability of the minarets of Taj Mahal by Geodetic and Research Branch of the Survey of India, Dehradun. The study has revealed that the minarets are stable and

there was no tilting. Seismic studies on the Qutb Minar are in progress.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

#### **Doubling/Electrification of Railway Lines in Chhattisgarh**

5847. SHRI AJIT JOGI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of trains passing through Chhattisgarh everyday;

(b) whether the Railways have formulated any plan for track renewal, doubling and electrification of railway lines in Chhattisgarh; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the funds allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Statewise data is not maintained.

(b) and (c) The project-wise progress along with the target dates of completion, wherever fixed, and budget allocation provided during 2007-08 for various new/ongoing Doubling projects including electrification falling fully/party in Chhattisgarh are given as under:—

| Sl. No. | Name of the Project                  | Present status  | Outlay provided in the Budget 2007-08 (Rs. in Crore) |
|---------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1       | 2                                    | 3   | 4  |
| 1.      | Bilaspur-Urkura (3rd Line) (110 Kms) | Bilaspur-Bhatapara (55 Kms) has been completed and commissioned. Work on Bhatapara-Urkura (60 Kms) is being executed by the Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) and is likely to be completed during 2008-09. | 74.00  |

| 1  | 2  | 3   | 4     |
|----|--|---|-------|
| 2. | Bilaspur-Salka Road-Patch doubling (39.4 Kms)      | Earthwork and bridgeworks have been taken up. Bilaspur-Uslapur (9 Kms) and Uslapur-Kalmitar (15 Kms) are targeted to be completed during 2007-08. | 25.00 |
| 3. | Bhilai-Durg (3rd Line) (13.15 Kms)                 | Detailed Estimate has been sanctioned. Tenders are under process.   | 20.00 |
| 4. | Salka Road-Khongasara-Patch Doubling (26 Kms)      | Preliminary works like the preparation of plans and estimates, etc. have been taken up. The work will be executed by RVNL.                        | 10.00 |
| 5. | Khodri-Anuppur with flyover at Bilaspur (61.6 Kms) | Preliminary works like the preparation of plans and estimates, etc. have been taken up. The work will be executed by RVNL.                        | 10.00 |
| 6. | Kalumna-Nagpur Doubling                            | New works included in the Budget 2007-08.   | 2.00  |
| 7. | Anuppur Bypass Line                                | Preliminary works like the preparation of plans and estimates, etc. etc. are being taken up.  | 5.00  |
| 8. | Champa Bypass Line                                 |   | 5.00  |

Track renewals are carried out as and when they become due for renewal on age cum condition basis and subject to availability of resources. It is a continuous process.

#### **Saraswati Plan**

5848. SHRI HANSRAJ G. AHIR: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has discontinued the project to trace River Saraswati;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the amount of expenditure incurred on the project before it was discontinued;

(d) whether the members of the project team have come to any conclusion regarding tracing of river Saraswati; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The Government has not sanctioned any project to trace River Saraswati.

(b) to (e) The question does not arise.

*[English]*

#### **Train Service between Delhi and Bhuj**

5849. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether super fast train service between Delhi and Bhuj on the lines of Rajdhani Express is under consideration of the Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by when it is likely to be introduced?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

**Railway Regulatory Authority**

5850. SHRI ANANDRAO ADSUL:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

SHR' RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an Expert Group nominated by his Ministry has recommended that the Indian Railways should function on commercial lines;

(b) if so, whether there is any proposal to corporatise the Indian Railways to achieve the objectives;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Expert Group on Railways has recommended to set up a Railway Regulatory Authority; and

(e) if so, the response of the Railways thereto?

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

(b) and (c) No, Sir.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) There is no such proposal at present.

*[Translation]*

**Train Service between Kodinar and Junagarh**

5851. SHRJ V.K. THUMMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite the presence of a railway line between Kodinar and Junagarh there is no train service along the said division;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to start train service in the said railway division?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The train service between Junagarh and Kodinar is possible with a change over at Prachi Road. Train services are also available between Kodinar-Prachi Road/Talala/Veraval, Junagarh-Delvada/Khijadiya/Veraval/Visavadar/Prachi Road/Talala.

(b) and (c) Introduction of train between Junagarh and Kodinar has been examined but it has not been found feasible due to resource constraints.

*[English]*

**Samjhauta Express**

5852. SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the bilateral pact for exchange of railway service by Samjhauta Express across the borders with Pakistan has been extended; and

(b) if so, the terms and conditions thereof?

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

(b) The delegations of Indian Railways and Pakistan Railways met in Islamabad from April 7-9, 2007 and agreed to extend the existing Agreement relating to rail communication between India and Pakistan via Attari-Wagah for running of Samjhauta Express for a further period of three years with effect from 20-1-2007 to 19-1-2010.

**Demand and Supply of Kerosene**

5853. SHRJ G.M. SIDDESWARA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the average annual production of kerosene in the country; refinery-wise;

(b) whether the production of the kerosene is sufficient to meet the requirement in the country;

(c) if not, the actual requirement of kerosene for PDS and for the open market;

(d) whether the Government proposes to direct the refineries to produce more kerosene in order to meet the shortfall; and

(e) if so, the quantity of kerosene to be produced by refineries in order to maintain adequate supply of kerosene in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) The refinery-wise production of kerosene in the country for the year 2006-2007 is given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) The production of kerosene is not sufficient to meet the requirement of the country and is, therefore, being imported.

(c) As against the allocation of 9160 Thousand Metric Tonne (TMT) of kerosene for PDS (excluding adhoc allocations), the actual upliftment of kerosene during 2006-2007 approximately is as under:—

PDS: 9175 TMT

Non PDS: 206 TMT

(d) and (e) The refinery sector is decontrolled. Refineries decide their yield pattern based on commercial considerations. Any deficit in production of kerosene is met through imports of kerosene.

#### **Statement**

*SKO Production, 2006-2007*

(Qty. in TMT)

| Refineries/Fractionators | Production |
|--------------------------|------------|
| 1                        | 2          |
| HPCL, Mumbai             | 239        |
| HPCL, Visakh             | 1016       |

| 1                  | 2    |
|--------------------|------|
| BPCL, Mumbai       | 1001 |
| BPCL, Kochi        | 646  |
| NRL, Numaligarh    | 247  |
| IOCL, Koyali       | 1126 |
| IOCL, Mathura      | 510  |
| IOCL, Panipat      | 765  |
| IOCL, Haldia       | 405  |
| IOCL, Barauni      | 754  |
| IOCL, Guwahati     | 56   |
| IOCL, Digboi       | 42   |
| CPCL, Manali       | 628  |
| CPCL, Nagapattinam | 60   |
| BRPL, Bongaigaon   | 187  |
| ONGC, Tatipaka     | 12   |
| MRPL, Mangalore    | 727  |
| RIL, Jamnagar      | 55   |
| ESSAR, Jamnagar    | 0    |
| ONGC, Hazira       | 144  |
| Total              | 8621 |

#### **Performance of Garib Rath Trains**

5854. SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have assessed the performance of the Garib Rath trains introduced by the Railways during 2006-07; and

(b) if so, the details of performance of each Garib Rath trains separately?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) The average occupancy of 2203/2204 Saharsa-Amritsar Garib Rath Express is more than 64% and that of 2353/2354 Patna (Rajendranagar)-Nizamuddin Garib Rath Express is around 55%. The average occupancy of 2611/2612 Chennai-Nizamuddin Garib Rath Express and 2909/2910 Nizamuddin-Bandra Terminus Garib Rath Express is more than 39% and 95% respectively.

**Bifurcation of Hampi and  
Nanded Express**

5855. SHRI K. VIRUPAKSHAPPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a persistent public demand to bifurcate Hampi Express and Nanded Express to make them independent trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The demand has been examined but not found feasible due to operational constraints.

**Allotment of Stalls to Women at  
Railway Stations**

5856. SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU:

SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to allot stalls at the railway stations to the women Self-Help groups at concessional rates and make provision for providing more posts for women in the appointment of TTEs and engine drivers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken in this regard and the time by which the decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

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

do not permit for giving preference in recruitment, as TTEs, Engine drivers or to provide stalls at concessional rates to women.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

**Purchase of Arms from Russia**

5857. SHRI SAJJAN KUMAR:

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL:

SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN:

SHRI J.M. AARON RASHID:

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the hurdles are coming in purchase of arms from Russia under the Arms Procurement Scheme;

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

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (c) All procurements from various countries, including Russia, are done under Defence Procurement Procedure 2006 (DPP-2006).

Issues, if any, are resolved through mutual discussions and diplomatic channels through forums like Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental commission on Military Technical Cooperation and working groups.

[English]

**Poor Condition in Garib Rath**

5858. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether most of the locks of the toilets of Garib Rath are not functional and as a result thereof the toilets doors can not be kept closed;

(b) whether these problems have been observed in Mumbai Garib Rath and Patna Garib Rath recently;

(c) if so, whether the Railways have any proper monitoring systems to take care of such short comings and also to fix the responsibility; and

(d) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) No, Sir. All the interior fixtures and passenger amenity items are checked during maintenance of rakes prior to commencement of journey. However, occasional defect like improper locking etc. that develop during run are rectified during maintenance on arrival at the destination station.

#### **Disbursement of Scholarship to SC Students**

5859. SHRI M. SREENIVASULU REDDY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the stipend amount to Scheduled Castes students is not being disbursed in time and a suitable mechanism needs to be put in place to ensure timely allocation of funds by the Union Government to the States for disbursement of amount of scholarship each month from the beginning of the academic year; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) and (b) This Ministry administers a central sponsored scheme of post matric scholarship for SC students and the scheme is implemented through State Governments/UT administration. The disbursement of scholarship amount to students is also done by State Governments/UTs administration. Instructions have been issued to State Government/UTs administration from time to time for disbursement of scholarship in time.

#### **[Translation]**

#### **Five Point Programme on Sachar Committee Report**

5860. DR. CHINTA MOHAN:

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Commission for Minorities has forwarded the 'Five Point Programme' to the Government in respect of report of Sachar Committee;

(b) if so, the details of points included in Five Point Programme; and

(c) the reaction of Government to implement the said Five Point Programme?

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

(b) The National Commission for Minorities (NCM) has forwarded recommendations on the report of the Sachar Committee on the following five items:—

(i) Education (ii) Economy and Employment opportunities (iii) Access to bank credit (iv) Access to social and physical infrastructure and government programmes and (v) Public employment and recruitment procedures.

(c) The recommendations of the Sachar Committee are under consideration of Government.

#### **Gauge Conversion**

5861. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH "LALAN":

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the operation of trains on the meter gauge and narrow gauge has been proving economically unviable for the Railways;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the average annual estimated loss incurred by the Railways on account of it; and

(c) the steps taken to meet the losses?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. By operation of trains on the metre gauge and narrow gauge lines, Indian Railways have incurred a loss of Rs. 2977 crores and Rs. 2771 crores during 2004-05 and 2005-06 respectively.

(c) Progressive gauge conversion is expected to reduce the losses.

[English]

#### **Advertisement Policy in Railways**

5862. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether advertisement on wagons by different companies on experimental basis has proved immensely successful in the South Western Railways;

(b) if so, the total revenue generated by Railways so far on this account;

(c) whether keeping in view the success of the scheme, the Railways propose to extend the scheme across the country to earn more revenue.

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

(e) the total revenue generation estimated by railways from this scheme year-wise?

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

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[Translation]

#### **Railway Lines/Stations in Maharashtra**

5863. SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:

SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO  
GAWALI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have received representations from the Government of Maharashtra and public representatives regarding laying of railway lines and railway stations etc. in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last two years and the current year so far; and

(c) the action taken thereon so far?

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 House.

#### **Trishul Missile Project**

5864. SHRI RAKESH SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons behind the failure of the Trishul Missile Project;

(b) whether there is any necessity of Trishul Missile Project after the successful test firing of Agni-3 Missile;

(c) if so, the justification thereof alongwith the salient features of Trishul missile;

(d) whether the Government proposes to purchase missiles from the foreign countries in the absence of Trishul type missiles; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) Trishul missile system is not a failure. Technically it has met the performance objectives as per original Qualitative Requirements (QRs) though delayed. The main reason for this delay are technical problems in achieving perfect 3-beam guidance and obtaining millimetric wave components from abroad.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Trishul missile is a low-level, quick-reaction, short range, surface-to-air missile against air targets whereas, Agni-III is a long range surface-to-surface missile against fixed strategic targets.

(d) and (e) As the realization of Trishul missile system got delayed, Users (Army, Air Force, and Navy)



resorted to acquisition from abroad as the QRs and operational requirements got modified over time.

Dialogue is still on with Air Force to accept the system developed and produced for deploying in certain locations and for training/fire control/air defence practices.

[English]

**Refrigerated Wagons for Transportation of Perishable Items**

5865. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have developed special refrigerated wagons for transportation of perishable items such as vegetables, fruits etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of such wagons likely to be introduced, zone-wise, during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal to manufacture such wagons.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

**Advertisement for Retail Outlets**

5866. SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of advertisement published by different public sector companies seeking application for grant of retail outlets on petroleum products during each of the last three years;

(b) whether in Scheduled Tribe dominated areas, advertisements are published only for open category people in the country in general and in Orissa in particular;

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

(d) whether the Government has received any

report regarding violation of reservation principle prescribed by the Government for allotment of retail outlets meant for various categories of candidates for opening up retail outlets; and

(e) if so, the steps the Government is taking to check this violation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) The details of advertisements made by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies, viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) during the last three years are as under:

| Year    | No. of locations advertised |
|---------|-----------------------------|
| 2004-05 | 4653                        |
| 2005-06 | 17437                       |
| 2006-07 | 3775                        |

(b) and (c) Locations for retail outlet dealerships including Scheduled Tribes dominated areas are advertised as per the reservation criteria for Scheduled Tribes (ST) category specified for each State in the country, including the State of Orissa. For the State of Orissa, out of the reservation of 25% for SC/ST, 14% is earmarked for 'ST' category.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

**Procurement of Night Vision Devices**

5867. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY:

SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Defence Forces propose to acquire night vision devices to enhance the night-fighting capabilities;

(b) if so, the countries from which such devices would be procured and the total estimated cost thereof;

(c) whether the trials on such night vision devices have been conducted; and

(d) if so, the test reports thereof and the extent to which these are likely to be beneficial for the Defence Forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Defence forces propose to acquire night vision devices.

The acquisitions are proposed to be made through floating of Global Request for Proposals/Foreign Military Sales route.

The evaluations/trials are in progress in some of the cases. Divulging the details in this regard on the Floor of the House would not be in the interest of national security.

The procurement of these devices would enhance the night-fighting capabilities of the Armed Forces.

#### **Indo-Malaysia Military Cooperation**

5868. SHRI BADIGA RAMAKRISHNA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Defence Minister of Malaysia visited India recently;

(b) if so, the detail of issues discussed thereof; and

(c) the status of military cooperation at present between India and Malaysia?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) The Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister of Malaysia H.E. Dato' Sri Mohd Najib visited India from 6th to 12th June 2006.

(b) During the visit the Malaysian Minister met Raksha Mantri. Both sides discussed issues of mutual interest and agreed to further enhance defence cooperation between the two countries.

(c) The main areas of defence cooperation are military training, exchange of visits and ship visits. The defence cooperation between the two countries is monitored periodically through the mechanism of Malaysia-India Defence Cooperation Meetings and it is proceeding satisfactorily.

*[Translation]*

#### **Job for Dependent Member**

5869. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have formulated any scheme for providing job to one member from each of the families which are affected on account of construction of railway line and also to give them priority while allotting the snacks stalls at the stations; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) There has been a policy of the Ministry of Railways for offering appointment in Group 'D' in Railways to land losers only if large area or house or substantial livelihood has been taken away for establishment of projects. As regards, giving priority in allotment of catering/vending stalls, certain percentage of reservation has been provided to the persons who have been dislocated/displaced due to their land having been taken over by the railway for its own use.

*[English]*

#### **Wagon Factory in Kerala**

5870. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any discussion on the proposed collaboration of the Railways with the Kerala State PSU AUTOKAST for building wagons in Churthula, Kerala, as proposed in the Railway Budget has been held;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the proposal is likely to be put in practice?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

#### **Computerised Reservation Centre**

5871. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to open more computerized reservation centres in various States;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the criteria for selection of sites for opening of such centres; and

(d) the funds allocated for setting up of such centres during 2006-07, the funds utilized so far and proposed for 2007-08?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Exclusive Computerised Reservation Centres have been sanctioned at 126 more locations. Details available at enclosed Statement-I.

(c) The criteria for selection of sites for opening of Computerised Reservation Centre is given in the enclosed Statement-II.

(d) In the Financial year 2006-07, approximately Rs. 6.89 crores have been sanctioned for opening of Computerised Reservation centres. Out of this approximately Rs. 3.16 crores have been utilized. For the Financial Year 2007-08, approximately Rs. 24 lakhs have been allocated uptill now.

#### **Statement-I**

| Sl.No. | State             | No. of locations |
|--------|-------------------|------------------|
| 1.     | Andhra Pradesh    | 1                |
| 2.     | Arunachal Pradesh | 14               |
| 3.     | Assam             | 6                |

| Sl.No. | State             | No. of locations |
|--------|-------------------|------------------|
| 4.     | Bihar             | 3                |
| 5.     | Chhattisgarh      | 2                |
| 6.     | Delhi             | 3                |
| 7.     | Gujarat           | 1                |
| 8.     | Haryana           | 3                |
| 9.     | Jammu and Kashmir | 8                |
| 10.    | Jharkhand         | 3                |
| 11.    | Karnataka         | 4                |
| 12.    | Madhya Pradesh    | 3                |
| 13.    | Maharashtra       | 2                |
| 14.    | Manipur           | 9                |
| 15.    | Meghalaya         | 6                |
| 16.    | Mizoram           | 7                |
| 17.    | Nagaland          | 9                |
| 18.    | Orissa            | 6                |
| 19.    | Punjab            | 0                |
| 20.    | Rajasthan         | 8                |
| 21.    | Sikkim            | 4                |
| 22.    | Tamil Nadu        | 3                |
| 23.    | Tripura           | 3                |
| 24.    | Union Territory   | 1                |
| 25.    | Uttar Pradesh     | 11               |
| 26.    | Uttaranchal       | 3                |
| 27.    | West Bengal       | 3                |
| Total  |                   | 126              |

#### **Statement-II**

- (i) All stations having reservation related workload qualify for provision of PRS facility.

- (ii) At least one PRS, railhead or non-railhead, in every district, irrespective whether the location is in District Head quarter or otherwise, need to be provided. PRS at places, other than District Headquarters would be finalized on the recommendation of District Collector and concerned Zonal Railway. District authorities will have to provide free-of-cost accommodation at non-railhead locations. Other cost towards air conditioning, channel, and equipment etc. is to be borne entirely by the Railways.
- (iii) Important tourist or hill stations and pilgrimages centers etc. also qualify for PRS facilities.
- (iv) Such railway stations, where there is no PRS within a vicinity of 50 Kms, may be considered for combined PRS-cum-UTS offices based on adequate justification provided by the concerned railway.
- (v) Additional PRS may be opened for such satellite locations in such Metrocities, which are thickly populated, having population of 4 lakhs and more and where no PRS center is available within a radius of 15 Kms. The railways may also recommend additional PRS centers in metro and other big cities, where urban population is increasing and leading to congestion in the existing PRS centers.
- (vi) No new conventional PRS centres be generally and exclusively provided at Universities, Institutions, Airports, Courts, etc. barring highly exceptional cases. They may be advised to tie up with IRCTC on the

pattern of corporate houses or alternatively they may opt for Internet kiosks to have Internet booking in their premises.

#### **Rehabilitation Service to Disabled**

5872. SHRI G. KARUNAKARA REDDY: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any programmes/schemes are being implemented for providing rehabilitation services to the persons with visual, hearing, orthopaedic and mental disabilities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the achievements made by Government in this regard during each of the last three years, State/UT-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) Apart from supporting various National Institutes for development of rehabilitation manpower, two major schemes viz. ADIP and Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Schemes (DDRS) are implemented to provide services to persons with disabilities. Under ADIP scheme, assistive devices are provided to needy persons free of cost or at subsidized rates depending on their income through NGOs or Government organizations. Under DDRS, NGOs are supported to run special schools, vocational training centres, early intervention projects, half-way homes etc. State-wise, UT-wise number of beneficiaries covered in the last three years for the two scheme is given in the enclosed Statement.

#### **Statement**

#### ***Deendayal Disabled Rehabilitation Schemes and ADIP Scheme***

| Sl. No. | State/UT       | 2003-04<br>No. of Persons<br>Benefited | 2004-05<br>No. of Persons<br>Benefited | 2005-06<br>No. of Persons<br>Benefited |
|---------|----------------|--|--|--|
| 1       | 2              | 3                                      | 4                                      | 5                                      |
| 1.      | Andhra Pradesh | 43618                                  | 51271                                  | 35605                                  |

| 1   | 2                      | 3     | 4     | 5     |
|-----|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2.  | Arunachal Pradesh      | 462   | 166   | 551   |
| 3.  | Assam                  | 900   | 1230  | 1445  |
| 4.  | Bihar                  | 3585  | 4376  | 8659  |
| 5.  | Chandigarh             | 871   | 117   | 1505  |
| 6.  | Chhattisgarh           | 1807  | 3244  | 12105 |
| 7.  | Dadar and Nagar Haveli | 0     | 0     | 210   |
| 8.  | Delhi                  | 46811 | 32288 | 29917 |
| 9.  | Goa                    | 286   | 529   | 203   |
| 10. | Gujarat                | 44192 | 42056 | 18262 |
| 11. | Haryana                | 13125 | 6737  | 6013  |
| 12. | Himachal Pradesh       | 633   | 769   | 6399  |
| 13. | Jammu and Kashmir      | 94    | 87    | 293   |
| 14. | Jharkhand              | 709   | 387   | 442   |
| 15. | Karnataka              | 18092 | 11116 | 16680 |
| 16. | Kerala                 | 18890 | 9923  | 4732  |
| 17. | Madhya Pradesh         | 3133  | 2597  | 6228  |
| 18. | Maharashtra            | 26824 | 25713 | 27790 |
| 19. | Manipur                | 844   | 840   | 809   |
| 20. | Meghalaya              | 832   | 467   | 682   |
| 21. | Mizoram                | 1540  | 225   | 152   |
| 22. | Orissa                 | 16464 | 23602 | 23346 |
| 23. | Pondicherry            | 71    | 81    | 89    |
| 24. | Punjab                 | 3798  | 7740  | 9402  |
| 25. | Rajasthan              | 29032 | 26211 | 35939 |
| 26. | Tamil Nadu             | 14618 | 19240 | 43508 |
| 27. | Tripura                | 150   | 460   | 65    |

| 1     | 2             | 3      | 4      | 5      |
|-------|---------------|--------|--------|--------|
| 28.   | Uttar Pradesh | 101081 | 135676 | 165580 |
| 29.   | Uttaranchal   | 15975  | 11645  | 1186   |
| 30.   | West Bengal   | 28900  | 30722  | 37865  |
| Total |               | 437337 | 449515 | 495662 |

[Translation]

### Transfer Policy in ONGC

5873. CH. MUNAWAR HASSAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the transfer policy of officers, Deputy General Managers, General Managers in ONGC;

(b) whether various officers of ONGC from the rank of Deputy General Manager and above are working at the same place for the last many years particularly in Ahmedabad;

(c) if so, the reasons for not implementing the transfer policy in a proper way in ONGC offices and refineries situated in different States; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government for proper implementation of transfer policy in ONGC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) The transfer of officers is governed by Job Rotation and Transfer Policy (JRTP). With the implementation of organizational restructuring under Corporate Rejuvenation Campaign (CRC), senior positions in the company have been defined, along with their empowerment. Transfer of senior officers is therefore linked to availability of appropriate slots and work requirements. The policy provides for:

- (i) The planned movement of employees from one job/station to another, so as to meet operational/administrative requirements and ensure employee career development.

(ii) Effecting of the transfers based on station seniority, work requirements, specific expertise, previous postings, north-east tenure, etc.

(iii) Executives below corporate level are expected to work in at least 3 work centres (including North-East) before their elevation to provide appropriate exposure for career development.

(iv) Normally, the employees qualify for consideration for transfer after completion of 3 years tenure (minimum) in the Northeast and 5 years (minimum) at other work centres. However, based on work operational requirements and individual requests, these periods may vary.

(b) Only one General Manager and fifteen Deputy General Managers (DGM) are working at Ahmedabad for more than five years, out of which, ten DGMs have been working for more than 7 years.

(c) Job Rotation and Transfer Policy is strictly followed for transfer of employees of ONGC.

(d) Transfer of employees in ONGC is governed by the Job Rotation and Transfer Policy.

### Railway Station and Routes in Vidarbha Region

5874. PROF. MAHADEO RAO SHIWANKAR:

SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have identified the railway stations and routes in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra

which have not been functional as yet despite the announcement thereof;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which such Railway Stations and

routes are likely to be made functional?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) The details of railway projects identified in Vidarabha region of Maharashtra and details thereof are as under:

(Rs. in crore)

| Sl. No. | Name of the ongoing Project        | Km     | Anticipated cost | Present status and target wherever fixed  |
|---------|------------------------------------|--------|------------------|---|
| 1.      | Amravati-Narkher new line          | 138    | 284.27           | Section from Amravati to Chandur Bazar (44 kms) completed. In Chandurbazar-Narkher section, earthwork, bridge work and ballast collection taken up. |
| 2.      | Akola-Purna gauge conversion       | 210    | 245.22           | Earthwork, bridge work and ballast collection taken up. Work is targetted for completion during 2007-08.  |
| 3.      | Chhindwara-Nagpur gauge conversion | 149.52 | 383.79           | Final Location Survey completed. Earthwork and bridgework taken up.   |

[English]

**Stoppage of Shan-E-Punjab at Kartarpur Station**

5875. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether New Delhi to Amritsar bound train 'Shan-E-Punjab' does not stop at Kartarpur station falling between Amritsar and Jalandhar city;

(b) if so, whether the Railways propose to halt the said train at the Kartarpur station keeping in view of the hardship being faced by the large number of pilgrims; and

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

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

(b) and (c) No, Sir. There is no proposal to provide

stoppage of 2497/2498 Hazrat Nizamuddin-Amritsar Shan-e-Punjab Express at Kartarpur station. However, this super fast train is already stopping at Jalandhar City, which is 15 kilometer from Kartarpur station.

**Railway Line Between Berhampur to Phulbani**

5876. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal to sanction a railway line between Berhampur to Phulbani has been pending with the Railways;

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay; and

(c) the steps taken by the Railways for timely completion of the said project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A survey for construction of a new line between Berhampur and

Phulbani was completed in 2002-03. As per the survey report, the cost of this 170-km-long new line was assessed as Rs. 500.42 crore with a negative rate of return. In view of non-remunerative nature of the project, heavy throw-forward of ongoing projects and acute constraint of resources, the proposed line could not be taken up.

#### **Plans to Build Military Capabilities**

5877. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether long terms defence and strategic planning continues to flounder, with no concrete measures yet in place to build military capabilities in a systematic manner in tune with the country's growing geo-political aspirations as reported in the 'Times of India' dated May 01, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the lack of systematic plans to build capabilities in the most cost effective manner, instead of merely procuring weapon systems, would certainly indicate otherwise; and

(d) if so, the corrective measures taken by the Union Government in his regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. The long term defence and strategic planning is in place wherein Long Term Integrated Perspective Plan (LTIPP) based on country's geo-political aspirations and capabilities required by defence forces is made for 15 years duration. This is modified every five years based on the changing requirements. The present LTIPP covers the period from 2002-2017.

(c) and (d) The procurement of defence items is carried out as per the procedure laid in Defence Procurement Procedure (DPP)-2006 and Defence Procurement Manual 2007 for capital and revenue procurements respectively. These procedures aim to ensure that the capabilities are acquired in most cost efficient manner.

#### **International Rail Corridors**

5878. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways proposed to develop international rail corridors as reported in 'Times of India' dated April 30, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Railways have discussed with neighbouring countries in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the reaction of the neighbouring countries thereto; and

(f) the time by which international rail corridors is likely to be operational?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) For development of International Corridors, an Inter-governmental Agreement on Trans-Asian Railway has been negotiated under UN-ESCAP. The Agreement has been opened for Signature in November, 2006. There is a missing link between India and Myanmar which will require to be constructed for operationalizing the corridor. RITES carried out a feasibility study for India-Myanmar rail link. The Report was submitted to Myanmar Government. The likely expenditure as per the study on construction of new rail link between Jiribam-Moreh in India and Tamu-Kalay-Segyl in Myanmar is estimated as Rs. 4,280 Crore.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

(f) No specific timeframe has been set for operationalizing the project.

#### **Assistance for Gandhian Studies**

5879. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allocated for Gandhian Studies during the last three years;



(b) whether the Government proposes to provide more assistance to institutions which are promoting Gandhian studies and the amount earmarked for the same during the current year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) No specific allocation for the purpose was made during the last three years. However, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti, an Autonomous organization under the Ministry has been spreading the life message of Mahatma Gandhi through various socio-educational-cultural programmes and in addition Government has sanctioned an amount of Rs. 10.50 crores in financial year 2005-06 to Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad and Rs. 23 crores to the following Gandhian Institutions during the year 2006-07:

1. National Gandhi Museum, New Delhi—Rs. 5.00 crores
2. Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Indore—Rs. 5.00 crores
3. Sevagram Ashram Pratishthan, Wardha—Rs. 5.00 crores
4. Magan Sangrahalaya Samiti, Wardha—Rs. 4.00 crores
5. Gandhi Memorial Museum, Madurai—Rs. 1.00 crore
6. Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Barrackpore—Rs. 1.00 crore
7. Gandhi Sangrahalaya, Patna—Rs. 1.00 crore
8. Mani Bhawan Gandhi Sangrahalaya, Mumbai—Rs. 1.00 crore

During the current financial year 2007-08, the Finance Minister while presenting the Union Budget 2007-08, has announced a grant of Rs. 30 crores to the following Gandhian Institutions:

- (1) Sabarmati Ashram, Ahmedabad.

(2) Sevagram Ashram, Wardha.

(3) Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune.

(4) Rajendra Smriti Sangrahalaya, Patna.

#### **Safety Audit Certificate for AI**

5880. SHRI KULDEEP BISHNOI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the International Air Transport Association (IATA) has cancelled Air India's Operations Safety Certificate for failing to meet the audit standards;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the AI to obtain IATA Safety Audit Certificate?

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

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

#### **Open Sale of Kerosene**

5881. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI:

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

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

(a) whether the oil marketing companies are planning to sell kerosene in the open market;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the rates at which the kerosene is likely to be sold in open market;

(c) the time by which the kerosene is likely to arrive in open market; and

(d) if not, the steps being taken by the Government to reduce the difference in rates of PDS and non-PDS kerosene in the market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat

Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPC) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPC) are marketing non-PDS kerosene in the open market. As per the existing system of marketing of non-PDS kerosene followed by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), the genuine industrial and non-domestic customers having requirement of more than one Tank Lorry load at a time are being supplied directly and the requirement of small customers having requirement less than full Tank Lorry load is being met through the existing SKO-LDO dealership network at the non-subsidized rate.

It is also planned to introduce sale of kerosene in small packs on trial basis initially, to assess the acceptability of product in small packs by customers. It is envisaged that kerosene would be made available in small packs of 1 litre to customers who are not covered under the Public Distribution System (PDS).

Under the provisions of kerosene (Restriction on Use and Fixation of Ceiling Price) Order, 1993, Government have permitted Oil Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemical Limited (MRPL) and Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) to market their indigenously produced kerosene, after meeting the demand of PDS kerosene in full, to non-PDS customers. Oil companies sell free sale kerosene at market prices as per the requirements.

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

[English]

#### **Vicinity of Monuments**

5882. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is under consideration of the Union Government to improve the vicinity of all the monuments across the country;

(b) if so, the details and the amount earmarked for the same; and

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

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) The Annual Conservation Plan of the Archaeological Survey of India provides for development of the environs of the centrally protected monuments. For the current year, Rs.13.30 crores has been provided for this purpose.

The conservation and environmental development is a continuous process subject to the availability of the resources.

#### **Gauge Conversion**

5883. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware that there is a long pending demand for the conversion of MG line between Mayiladuthurai-Peralam-Thiruthurai-poondi-Adhirampattinam-Pattukottai-Karaikudi into BG line;

(b) if so, the action taken by the Railways thereon; and

(c) the time by which the MG line would be converted into BG line?

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

(b) Work has been included in the budget 2007-08.

(c) No target date for completion of this project has been fixed.

[Translation]

#### **Criteria for Railway Rakes**

5884. SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have laid down any criteria to determine the priority of railway rakes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government of Chhattisgarh has sent a demand for rakes for transportation of salt;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the reasons for not providing the rakes so far; and

(f) the time by which the rakes are likely to be available to the State?

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

(b) As per current Preferential Traffic Schedule General Order No. 81, the priority for allotment of rakes for various commodities is determined broadly in the following order:

Priority 'A'—Military Traffic.

Priority 'B'—(i) Goods for emergency relief work for victims of national calamities like floods, drought, earthquake etc.

(ii) Foodgrains and levy sugar for Public Distribution System or other welfare schemes sponsored by Food Corporation of India.

Priority 'c'—All programmed traffic of coal, edible salt, raw-material for steel plants, fertilizer and Petroleum Oil & Lubricants (POL) when sponsored by government agencies and accepted by Railway authorities.

Priority 'D'—All Traffic not included in Priority 'A' to 'C'.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) to (f) Do not arise.

[English]

#### **Shortage of Qualified Engineers in Railways**

5885. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY:

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are facing shortage of qualified engineers for its ongoing projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Indian Railways Institute of Civil Engineering (IRICEN) is imparting training to engineers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether it is proposed to impart training to engineers from private companies and PSUs to meet the shortage; and

(f) 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) Yes, Sir.

(d) After their recruitment, officers of Civil Engineering department are provided 78 weeks probationary training and thereafter, in-service training from time to time in professional areas.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

#### **New Schemes for NER**

5886. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) details of various ongoing projects taken up by the Ministry in the North East Region under 10 per cent budgetary provision showing total outlay, amount sanction, unutilized, and achievement made during 10th Plan period, State-wise and proposed during 2007-08 along with target set for each project;

(b) the thrust area proposed for 11th Plan period.

(c) the details of new schemes, if any, proposed to be launched in the region during 11th Plan period;

(d) whether the Shillapgram project being executed at Guwahati is commissioned fully with all facilities; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The Ministry of Culture has been undertaking various activities to promote art and culture in North East Region through

various Plan schemes of the Ministry as well as its attached/subordinate offices and autonomous organizations.

The 10 per cent of the total Plan Outlay for the Ministry of Culture during the 10th Plan period (2002-07) amounting to Rs. 179.56 crore was earmarked for undertaking activities in North East Region. Against this, an amount of Rs. 134.19 crore was utilized, leaving an unutilized amount of Rs. 45.37 crore. The activities undertaken by the Ministry cover almost all states in the North East Region.

During 2007-08, ten per cent of the Annual Plan allocation amounting to Rs. 55.70 crore, has been earmarked for various activities in the North East Region. This amount consists of Rs. 20.15 crore for Promotion and Dissemination of Art and Culture, Rs. 5.00 crore for Archaeology, Rs. 16.65 crore for Museums, Rs. 5.00 crore for Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Rs. 4.10 crore for Public Libraries, Rs. 1.70 crore for Other Expenditure (Memorials), Rs. 1.60 crore for Anthropology and Ethnology, Rs. 0.80 crore for Archives and Rs. 0.70 crore for Buddhist and Tibetan Studies.

(b) The major thrust areas proposed by the Ministry for the 11th Five-Year Plan (2007-2012) are as follows:—

- Maintenance and Conservation of the country's Heritage, Ancient Monuments and Historic Sites.
- Strengthening of Activities in the Field of Performing Arts.
- Overhauling the library sector to meet the needs of a knowledge society.
- Strengthening and Modernization of Museums.
- Impetus to the Activities of Buddhist and Tibetan Institutions.
- Education and Awareness Programmes.
- Development of Cultural and Creative Industries.

— Promotion and Dissemination of Awareness about Indian Culture and Heritage.

(c) The Ministry of Culture proposes to make all endeavor to protect, develop and promote culture of the region by strengthening its existing activities in North East Region during the 11th Plan period. There are no new schemes exclusively for the North Eastern Sector. However, the new schemes proposed for the Ministry of Culture will cover North Eastern region as well.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The Shilpagram Complex at Guwahati under the aegis of North East Zone Cultural Centre, Dimapur (Nagaland) has been completed and inaugurated by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India on 17th January, 2006. The Shilpagram Complex consists of 45 Crafts Stalls, 8 Food Stalls, 8 State Pavilions, an Auditorium, an Administrative Building, a Dormitory with 180 capacity and facilities like canteen and open air stage.

#### **Pilot Training Course**

5887. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Banaras Hindu University has offered a pilot training course;

(b) if so, whether the clearance has been given by the Government in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any other university in the country has offered such a course; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) The Director General of Civil Aviation has not received any such proposal.

(b) and (c) DO not arise.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

**Financial Assistance for Artisan  
Level Training Programme**

5888. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Kerala Government has submitted a proposal for financial assistance for Artisan Level Training Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) No such proposal has been submitted to the Ministry.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

*[Translation]*

**Reservation Quota in PSUs**

5889. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether reservation quota is not being implemented at higher posts in several PSUs;

(b) if so, the names of such undertakings;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether the Law relating to reservations is being complied in accordance to its objectives; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (e) Appointments to the Board-level-posts are made on the recommendation of Public Enterprises Selection Board after obtaining approval of the competent authority. There is no reservation in respect of the Board-level-posts. Appointments to the below Board-level posts are made by the management of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs). The instructions issued by the

Department of Personnel and Training in the matter of reservation in services have been extended to the Central Public Sector Enterprises for compliance and their implementation is monitored by the concerned Ministries/Departments.

*[English]*

**Bottlenecks in Critical Sections**

5890. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether certain bottlenecks are severely affecting the development of railways in the critical sections;

(b) if so, whether the Railways have identified the projects which would be taken up on priority basis to augment the capacity of the critical sections;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken to complete these projects on priority basis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Augmentation of the carrying capacity on various routes is a continuous process and works are being taken up depending upon traffic requirements. High Density Network (HDN) have been identified covering 7 main routes and various works have been taken up to increase capacity on these routes. These works primarily include doubling/multiple lines, traffic facility and other signaling works. Besides HDN, works have also been taken up on other saturated sections to augment capacity. The proposed dedicated freight corridors would also generate additional capacity on the saturated corridors.

(d) Necessary funds are being allocated for completion of the throughput enhancement works in a time frame of 2-3 years. The progress is being monitored to ensure timely completion.

### **Social Responsibility Programmes**

5891. SHRI K.S. RAO: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to formulate a policy for public sector undertakings (PSUs) to undertake social responsibility programmes corresponding to sector/area the PSU is working in and regulate execution of projects linking them with the State-run similar projects; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) and (b) As per existing guidelines on social responsibility for CPSEs, the individual CPSEs may identify and implement social responsibilities keeping in view their financial ability to sustain such activities, operating environment and provisions in its Memorandum of Association/Statute. The Board of CPSEs have full flexibility in identification and implementation of Social Responsibilities.

### **Cargo Handling Airports in Andaman and Nicobar Islands**

5892. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be please to state:

(a) the details of Airports in Andaman and Nicobar Islands which are having cargo handling facilities at present, airport-wise;

(b) the details of cargo handled by each of them during each of the last three years; and

(c) the details of airports in these Islands where cargo handling facilities are proposed to be made available within next few years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Port Blair airport, the only airport in Andaman and Nicobar Islands has no international cargo handling facilities at present. Domestic Cargo is handled by Indian and Jet Airways through the Terminal Building.

(b) Cargo handled (In tonnes) by Port Blair airport during the years 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 was 1736, 1442 and 1658, respectively.

(c) Does not arise in view of above.

### **Establishment of Science Cities**

5893. SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA:

SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH DHINDSA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the science cities set up so far in the country together with its aims and scope;

(b) whether some more science cities are being established in various parts of the country;

(c) if so, the details alongwith the locations thereof;

(d) the funds allocated for this purpose during the current year;

(e) whether all the States would be covered under this scheme so as to have cross-cultural interactions through these science cities; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) A Science City has been established at Kolkata in 1997 with a capital investment of Rs. 60 crores. Pushpa Gujral Science City at Jalandhar and another Science City in Gujarat, near Gandhinagar, are also being established. A sum of Rs.13 crores have been provided under the Scheme of Science Cities during the Annual Plan 2007-08.

(e) and (f) A Science City can be set up in any State subject to availability of funds and fulfillment of approved norms and guidelines of the Scheme.

### **Second 'Palace on Wheel'**

5894. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the 'Palace on Wheel' train is booked till 2009;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to run second 'Palace on Wheels' to cater to the popular demand for the train; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be put in operation?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU):** (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC), which is the nodal agency for booking of tourists for the train have registered 7380 requests and out of these 4120 are confirmed bookings for the 'Palace on Wheels' upto 30-04-2009.

(c) and (d) Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC) and this Ministry have decided to introduce second 'Palace on Wheels' train to run on the same sector as in the existing Palace on Wheels to cater to the demand of foreign and domestic tourists. No timeframe has been set for the launching of the train. However, as and when the rake is ready to run, the train will be put into operation.

#### **Over-Bridge at Koppala-Bhogyanagara**

**5895. SHRI K. VIRUPAKSHAPPA:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is an urgent need to construct an over-bridge at Koppala-Bhogyanagara (Karnataka) at Gate Number 62 or 64 as the traffic jam is creating a lot of problems to the people of this area;

(b) whether the Government of Karnataka has agreed to pay 50 per cent of the expenditure for the construction of this over-bridge; and

(c) if so, the response of the Railways in this regard?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU):** (a) Yes, Sir. There is a need for construction of a Road Over Bridge at the location mentioned in lieu of replacement of existing three level crossing numbers 62, 64 and 66.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Proposal of Road over bridge in lieu of Level crossings No. 62, 64 and 66 is being examined for inclusion in the Railways Works Programme 2008-09 and if necessitated can be considered during Supplementary Demands for Grants in mid year.

#### **Freight Terminals**

**5896. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV:** Will the minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new freight terminals being developed by the Railways along with their locations;

(b) the investment required for development of new freight terminals;

(c) the amount of extra revenue is likely to be generated from these new freight terminals;

(d) whether the Railways have any plan for handing over the management of certain freight terminals to the private companies; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU):** (a) to (c) New Freight Terminals are developed along with new lines as per demand and funds availability. Accountal of additional freight for new freight terminals is not maintained separately. There has been over all increase of 17.5% in freight revenue in 2006-07 (provisional).

(d) and (e) Indian Railways is developing warehousing complexes at 22 locations in collaboration with Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) as per the Memorandum of Understanding signed with CWC on 20-12-2003.

#### **Construction of New Airport In Hyderabad**

**5897. SHRI ASADUDDIN OWASI:** Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Rajiv Gandhi International Airport is being constructed in Hyderabad near Samashabad about 30 km away from the city;

(b) If so, the whether GMR group developer of the Airport has approached Andhra Pradesh Government for a dedicated airport having express rail link between airport and center of the city;

(c) if so, the details thereof and steps taken/being taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) whether the land of Begampet airport is likely to be vacated after operation of Rajiv Gandhi Airport; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and steps taken or being taken by the Government for proper utilisation of Begampet Airport on the projects submitted by Andhra Pradesh Government?

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

(c) The proposal seeks dedicated express rail connectivity between Begumpet and the new airport at Shamashabad. The State Government has requested the Central Government for assistance in implementing this vital connectivity project and the same is being examined.

(d) and (e) Airports Authority of India (AAI) is considering to set up an Integrated Aviation Academy or Aviation University at the existing Hyderabad International Airport, as also to set up maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) facilities for the airlines, once the new airport becomes operational.

[Translation]

#### **Discontinuation of Railway Halts**

5898. SHRI SANJAY DHOTRE:

SHRIMATI BHAVANA PUNDALIKRAO

GAWALI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of halt stations in Maharashtra as on date, district-wise;

(b) the amount of revenue earned by the Railways from these halt stations during the last one year;

(c) whether there are some Railway halt stations in the State which are running in losses;

(d) if so, whether the Railways are contemplating to discontinue such halts; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) There are 125 halt stations in Maharashtra (district-wise list is not maintained).

(b) The earnings from these halt stations during the last one year is approximately Rs. 3.3 crores.

(c) to (e) A halt station is considered unremunerative where average number of passengers is less than 25 per day (outward) on branch lines and 50 per day (outward) on main lines. From time to time halt stations where patronization is poor are closed. However, factors like requests from State Government or passenger amenity is taken into consideration before taking such decision.

[English]

#### **Gas Hydrates**

5899. DR. M. JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether new gas reserves namely "Gas Hydrates" have been discovered in Bay of Bengal offshore;

(b) if so, the details thereof including the rough estimate of the gas hydrates reserves found;

(c) whether India possess the requisite technology for exploitation of the gas hydrates;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken for exploitation of the gas hydrates?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Gas Hydrates have been



discovered during drilling and coring of two sites in KG basin in Eastern Offshore area in the Bay of Bengal. No gas hydrates reserves have been estimated so far. However, specialized studies are being planned to carry out volumetric estimation of gas hydrate discovered.

(c) to (e) There is no production technology/expertise available in the world to produce gas from gas hydrates. Under National Gas Hydrates Programme (NGHP), the Directorate General of Hydrocarbons has entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Japan, Korea and US to collaborate on knowledge sharing for exploration and exploitation of gas hydrate.

#### **Allotment of Petrol Pumps to SCs/STs**

5900. SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the basis on which retail petrol outlets in the country are allotted to prospective candidates and the basis of benchmarking reservation for allotment of petrol pumps/retail outlets to different categories of people including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;

(b) the number of petrol outlets allotted to various categories of applicants for each of the last three years, State-wise and year-wise;

(c) whether the Government is contemplating to allocate any retail petrol outlets during the financial year 2007-08; and

(d) if so, the number of such outlets to be allocated, State-wise and category-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) Based on certain broad parameters advised by the Government to the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), the latter have framed their guidelines for the selection of retail outlet dealerships, LPG distributorships and SKO-LDO dealerships for viable locations in the country, and have been making selections and allotments of such dealerships/distributorships in terms of these guidelines. The benchmarking reservation for allotment of petrol pumps/

retail outlets to different categories of people, i.e. Defence Personnel, Freedom Fighters, Outstanding Sports Persons, Paramilitary/Policy/Government Personnel, Physically Handicapped, Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, is done in line with the 100 point roster as per guidelines.

(b) to (d) Information is being obtained and will be furnished.

#### **Railway Quarters**

5901. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of abandoned Railway quarters/buildings/premises in the country, division-wise;

(b) the total number of Railway personnel who have been given residential facilities and the total number of staff who are not getting residential facilities in each division;

(c) whether a large number of Railway quarters have been unauthorisedly occupied by outsiders;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(e) whether there is any plan to provide residential facilities to all railway staff by 2007-08; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) Division-wise details of the zonal Railways have been given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) and (d) Few quarters have been unauthorizedly occupied by outsiders in some Zonal Railways, who are engaged in a continuous exercise to evict the occupiers as per extant rules/procedures contained in Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorized Occupants) Act, 1971 and Railways Act, 1989.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

**Statement**

| Railway      | Division    | Quarters, Buildings,<br>Premises abandoned | Staff provided<br>quarters | Staff not provided<br>quarters |
|--------------|-------------|--|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1            | 2           | 3  | 4                          | 5                              |
| Central      | Mumbai      | 713  | 13153                      | 39255                          |
|              | Bhusawal    | 1986                                       | 12421                      | 11766                          |
|              | Nagpur      | 733  | 8774                       | 4254                           |
|              | Pune        | 832  | 2292                       | 6597                           |
|              | Solapur     | 1084                                       | 8469                       | 1141                           |
| <b>Total</b> |             | <b>5348</b>                                | <b>45109</b>               | <b>63013</b>                   |
| Eastern      | Howrah      | 280  | 14285                      | Nil                            |
|              | Sealdah     | 298  | 15163                      | 12116                          |
|              | Asansol     | 440  | 8800                       | 2558                           |
|              | Malda       | 42   | 5444                       | 2377                           |
| <b>Total</b> |             | <b>1060</b>                                | <b>43692</b>               | <b>17051</b>                   |
| East Central | Danapur     | 231  | 7088                       | 6649                           |
|              | Dhanbad     | 282  | 13014                      | 10856                          |
|              | Mughalsarai | 51   | 8544                       | 5531                           |
|              | Samastipur  | 474  | 6185                       | 4646                           |
|              | Sonpur      | 22   | 6087                       | 5252                           |
| <b>Total</b> |             | <b>1060</b>                                | <b>40918</b>               | <b>32934</b>                   |
| East Coast   | Khurda Road | 58   | 9001                       | 5361                           |
|              | Sambalpur   | 166  | 2829                       | 2681                           |
|              | Waltair     | 585  | 11042                      | 10956                          |
| <b>Total</b> |             | <b>809</b>                                 | <b>22872</b>               | <b>18998</b>                   |
| Northern     | Delhi       | 470  | 15444                      | 49732                          |
|              | Firozpur    | 703  | 18784                      | 11977                          |

| 1                  | 2            | 3           | 4            | 5            |
|--------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
|                    | Lucknow      | 84          | 14882        | 11888        |
|                    | Moradabad    | 109         | 676          | 7451         |
|                    | Amhala       | 178         | 15504        | 10786        |
| <b>Total</b>       |              | <b>1544</b> | <b>75290</b> | <b>91834</b> |
| North Central      | Allahabad    | 597         | 16821        | 18787        |
|                    | Agra         | 750         | 3585         | 5480         |
|                    | Jhansi       | 617         | 5199         | 14811        |
| <b>Total</b>       |              | <b>1964</b> | <b>25605</b> | <b>39078</b> |
| North Eastern      | Izzatnagar   | 30          | 8435         | 1656         |
|                    | Lucknow City | 38          | 7986         | 9046         |
|                    | Varanasi     | 45          | 6589         | 8034         |
|                    | Gorakhpur    | 7           | 5794         | 12184        |
| <b>Total</b>       |              | <b>120</b>  | <b>28804</b> | <b>30920</b> |
| Northeast Frontier | Alipurduar   | Nil         | 7675         | 874          |
|                    | Katihar      | 30          | 11663        | 5857         |
|                    | Lumding      | 63          | 18569        | 5596         |
|                    | Rangia       | 8           | 6451         | 4390         |
|                    | Tinukia      | Nil         | 7288         | 1824         |
| <b>Total</b>       |              | <b>101</b>  | <b>51646</b> | <b>18541</b> |
| North Western      | Jaipur       | 128         | 7250         | 3644         |
|                    | Ajmer        | 656         | 4636         | 4598         |
|                    | Bikaner      | 481         | 8985         | 3286         |
|                    | Jodhpur      | 173         | 8137         | 4292         |
| <b>Total</b>       |              | <b>1438</b> | <b>29008</b> | <b>15820</b> |
| Southern           | Chennai      | 18          | 10985        | 45288        |
|                    | Madurai      | 26          | 4409         | 6108         |

| 1                        | 2                | 3           | 4            | 5            |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|
|                          | Palghat          | 11          | 6006         | 11426        |
|                          | Tiruchchirapalli | 21          | 7712         | 10465        |
|                          | Trivandrum       | 9           | 2498         | 8878         |
| <b>Total</b>             |                  | <b>85</b>   | <b>31610</b> | <b>82165</b> |
| <b>South Central</b>     | Secunderabad     | 100         | 2339         | 4517         |
|                          | Hyderabad        | 90          | 2645         | 4060         |
|                          | Guntakal         | 1401        | 6280         | 9250         |
|                          | Guntur           | 481         | 1319         | 2599         |
|                          | Nanded           | 153         | 2248         | 2650         |
|                          | Vijayawada       | 61          | 8000         | 12000        |
| <b>Total</b>             |                  | <b>2286</b> | <b>22631</b> | <b>35076</b> |
| <b>South Eastern</b>     | Adra             | 546         | 10296        | 5560         |
|                          | Chakradharpur    | 420         | 13781        | 9334         |
|                          | Kharagpur        | 949         | 19676        | 8602         |
|                          | Ranchi           | 66          | 3183         | 2716         |
| <b>Total</b>             |                  | <b>1981</b> | <b>46916</b> | <b>26212</b> |
| <b>Southeast Central</b> | Bilaspur         | 387         | 9468         | 10131        |
|                          | Nagpur           | 676         | 6250         | 7672         |
|                          | Raipur           | 234         | 5246         | 4236         |
| <b>Total</b>             |                  | <b>1297</b> | <b>20964</b> | <b>22039</b> |
| <b>South Western</b>     | Hubli            | 125         | 3894         | 532          |
|                          | Banglore         | 156         | 3455         | 637          |
|                          | Mysore           | 103         | 3988         | 3801         |
| <b>Total</b>             |                  | <b>386</b>  | <b>11337</b> | <b>5270</b>  |
| <b>Western</b>           | Mumbai           | 7540        | 6663         | 294          |
|                          | Vadodara         | 606         | 4784         | 9126         |

| 1            | 2         | 3            | 4            | 5            |
|--------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
|              | Ratlam    | 1395         | 8026         | 8231         |
|              | Ahmedabad | 740          | 10757        | 1721         |
|              | Rajkot    | 196          | 3446         | 3085         |
|              | Bhavnagar | 317          | 317          | 2741         |
| <b>Total</b> |           | <b>10794</b> | <b>38963</b> | <b>25198</b> |
| West Central | Jabalpur  | 60           | 9343         | 12825        |
|              | Bhopal    | 882          | 7422         | 12255        |
|              | Kota      | 361          | 8384         | 1124         |
| <b>Total</b> |           | <b>1303</b>  | <b>25149</b> | <b>26204</b> |

#### **Encroachment of Railway Land in Kolkata**

5902. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the area of railway land under encroachment in Kolkata;

(b) 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 (SURI R. VELU): (a) About 8 hectares.

(b) The land has been encroached upon over various years.

(c) Railways are engaged in a continuous exercise to free their land of encroachments as per provisions of Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971 and Railways Act, 1989. Apart from this railways also take preventive steps to check that more areas of railway land are not encroached upon. Regular monitoring is done at Zonal Headquarters and Railway Board level. However while trying to evict encroachers, railways have to face possibility of law and order

problems, litigations etc. For eviction of encroachers, railways are dependent on co-operation of State Government authorities including Police, to avoid law and order problems. Despite these constraints, railways make every effort to protect railway land from encroachers.

*[Translation]*

#### **Circulation of Old Cylinders**

5903. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG cylinders of 'Indane' and other companies in circulation in the market in different parts of the country as on date;

(b) the number of LPG cylinders which are still in circulation whereas their period of use is over, company-wise;

(c) whether the Government has evolved or proposes to evolve any scheme to withdraw such cylinders from the market;

(d) if so, whether the Government has received requests from public representatives in this regard;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) At present, 3 Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), namely Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) have nearly 15.17 crore cylinders in circulation in the country.

(b) There is no fixed life for LPG cylinders. As per the Gas Cylinders Rules, the cylinders are periodically tested and on being found fit are taken back into circulation. New LPG cylinders are being inducted by OMCs regularly. On detection, sub-standard/spurious cylinders are confiscated and thereafter de-shaped/crushed to prevent their re-circulation.

(c) to (f) OMCs are procuring LPG cylinders from cylinder manufacturers who are approved by the Oil Industry Technical Committee (OITC) and have valid manufacturing licences from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) and the Chief Controller of Explosives (CCOE). Strict control is exercised by BIS over the manufacturing process. LPG cylinders procured by OMCs meet the required quality standards.

LPG cylinders are manufactured under the close supervision of a third party inspection agency, viz. BIS, which enforces strict control over the manufacturing process. OITC also carries out surprise audit of cylinder manufacturing units to ascertain the quality standards of the cylinders. Cylinders received from distributors/transporters at the bottling plants are mandatorily checked for quality and genuineness to avoid the entry of fake and outdated cylinders in circulation.

As per the Gas Cylinders Rules, new cylinders are removed from circulation after regular intervals for extensive inspection and testing as per relevant IS codes. On detection, sub-standard/spurious cylinders are confiscated and thereafter de-shaped/crushed to prevent their re-circulation. In addition to this, during the course

of its use, if any major defects or leaks are noticed, then those cylinders are removed for repair or scrapped. Utmost care is taken by the OMCs to ensure that only sound cylinders are despatched to the customers.

Apart from the legal action which could be taken against any supplier of spurious LPG equipment, in case any distributor is found in possession of spurious equipment or inducts such equipment in the distribution system, Marketing Discipline Guidelines provide, inter-alia, for confiscation of equipment, imposition of fine and recovery at penal rates for the first and second offences and termination of distributorship in the event of a third offence.

[English]

#### Joint Venture In Cargo Complex

5904. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Airports Authority of India (AAI) proposes a Joint Venture Programme in the newly constructed airport cargo terminal complex at Trivandrum to have a new cargo complex;

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

(c) whether the AAI has consulted with the Kerala Government in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (e) The Airport Authority of India (AAI) is constructing a new international terminal building at Trivandrum airport. It also has plans to construct a cargo terminal facility adjacent to the terminal building. Presently, air cargo at this airport is being managed by Kerala State Industrial Enterprise (KSIE) as custodian appointed by the Customs Department. AAI has, however, offered to develop and operate its proposed international cargo facility on the available piece of land near the new international terminal building in Joint Venture with KSIE.

### Digital Coach Indicator System

5905. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have installed Digital Coach Indicator system at railway stations in the country;

(b) if so, the names of stations in Orissa where the said system has been installed so far;

(c) the time by which the said system is likely to be installed in all the stations in Orissa; and

(d) the details of funds incurred thereon so far?

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

(b) The above system has so far been installed in Bhubneshwar, Brahmapur, Puri, Sambalpur, Rourkela and Balasore stations in Orissa.

(c) Presently, there is no plan to cover all the stations in Orissa.

(d) So far Rs. 48.6 lakhs has been incurred on the provision of this system in the state of Orissa.

[Translation]

### Monitoring of Movement of Oil Tankers

5906. PROF. MAHADEORAO SHIWANKAR:

SHRI SHISHUPAL N. PATLE:

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

(a) whether the Government has formulated a plan to install Global Positioning System (GPS) in tankers/trucks so as to check adulteration in petrol/diesel;

(b) if so, whether it is likely to the decrease adulteration in the diesel and petrol;

(c) if so, the total quantity of oil being directly supplied to petrol pumps by public sector companies;

(d) whether any scheme has been introduced for

converting the big petrol pumps into automatic petrol pumps; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. With a view to checking diversion of subsidized kerosene and in order to monitor the movement of Tank Trucks transporting petroleum products, the Government have advised the public sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) for installing Global Positioning System (GPS) based vehicle tracking system on all the tank trucks. OMCs have taken up the task of providing GPS to the tank trucks in a phased manner. The essential feature of the system is that the vehicle carrying PDS SKO is fitted with a device which enables tracking of the vehicle movement on real time basis from the time it leaves the supply location till it reaches the destination.

(c) Public Sector OMCs supply petrol and diesel to retail outlets on delivered basis through tank trucks owned by dealers, contractors and the OMCs. During the year 2006-07, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) have supplied 8686 Thousand Metric Tonnes (TMT) of Petrol and 31367 TMT of Diesel to their retail outlets.

(d) and (e) In order to monitor the activities at retail outlets by adopting the latest technological improvements, Government has directed the public sector OMCs to undertake automation of retail outlets selling more than 200 KL per month. OMCs have already commenced the automation of these outlets in a phased manner and the same is expected to be completed during 2007-08.

[English]

### Haridaspur-Paradeep Railway Line

5907. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount sanctioned by the Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd. (RVNL) for acquisition of land for construction of Haridaspur-Paradeep railway line;

(b) whether the land acquisition process has been completed.

(c) if not, the progress thereof; and

(d) the steps taken to expedite the land acquisition process and to start the construction of the said line?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The total amount sanctioned for acquisition of land in the detailed estimate is Rs. 23.67 crore.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The total acquisition of land required for the project is 668 hectares. Out of this, 345.86 hectares has been taken into possession.

(d) Periodic meetings are held at the state level to expedite the land acquisition process. Physical construction work on two important bridges on the rivers Luna and Mahanadi has already commenced. Tenders for the roadbed, bridges and other works are under process.

#### **Construction of Hostels for SC Girls**

5908. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to take over the 50% share of States for construction of hostels for Scheduled Caste girls as reported in *The Times of India* dated May 1, 2007;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any proposal to take over the 50% share of States for SC boys hostels also;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken by the Union Government to help the poor boys belonging to SC communities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (d) Keeping in

view the wide gap between the literacy levels of SC girls and boys, a proposal has been formulated by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to raise the existing 50%, central assistance to 100% to the State Governments for construction of hostels for Scheduled Caste girls, so as to encourage their enrollment and arrest the drop out rate. However, in the case of construction of hostels for SC boys, the existing level of 50% central assistance will remain unchanged.

(e) The Government is implementing various schemes for SC boys and girls, which include—

- (i) Upgradation of Merit of SC students;
- (ii) Free Coaching including call center training for BPO industry;
- (iii) Post-Matric Scholarship Scheme;
- (iv) Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship;
- (v) National Overseas Scholarship Scheme; and
- (vi) NGO schemes for running schools and training centers.

#### **Policy on Wine and Beer**

5909. SHRI KISHANBHAI V. PATEL:

SHRI SUGRIB SINGH:

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

(a) whether the Government has announced a new policy for wine and beer industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the employment and revenue likely to be increased by the new policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): (a) to (c) No national policy for wine and beer has been announced by Government of India. Alcoholic Beverages including Wine and Beer fall within the jurisdiction of States under the Constitution.



However, Ministry proposes to support investment and modernization of the wine and beer manufacturing units.

**Gauge Conversion between  
Tiruvarur-Nagore**

5910. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of gauge conversion between Tiruvarur-Nagore;

(b) whether the Railways have any proposal to run train services between Chennai-Nagore and other destinations; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the new services are likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Formation work including bridges and linking of track has been taken up so as to complete the gauge conversion during 2007-08.

(b) and (c) It has been decided to introduce Chennai Egmore-Nagore Express during 2007-08.

*[Translation]*

**Stoppage of Trains at  
Ghaziabad Station**

5911. SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to provide stoppage to certain trains at Ghaziabad Station in view of the massive congestion at New Delhi railway station;

(b) if so, whether the Railways have also received some proposals in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Railways thereto;

(d) whether the Railways propose to provide stoppage to trains running on Ghaziabad-Mughalsarai-

Gaya section like Mahabodhi Express (2397-2398) at Ghaziabad station; and

(e) if so, the action being taken by the Railways in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Proposal for stoppage of 13 pairs of additional trains at Ghaziabad has been received. The proposal is being examined and action as found feasible and justified will be taken.

(d) No, Sir. At present, there is no proposal for provision of stoppage of 2397/2398 Gaya-New Delhi Mahabodhi Express at Ghaziabad

(e) Does not arise.

*[English]*

**Facilities/Package to Pregnant  
Women in Trains**

5912. SHRI K.C. PALLANI SHAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are aware of the problems being faced by the pregnant women and kin traveling in Railways due to inadequate seating arrangements and medical facilities;

(b) if so, whether the Railways have any proposal to provide special facilities/package to them; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Pregnant women, otherwise fit to travel, are provided accommodation in trains. However, there are no specialized medical facilities on board for pregnant women.

The trains can make unscheduled halts, if necessary, at the station enroute in emergencies for shifting the pregnant women to the nearest hospital. The Station Master have details of doctors, clinics and hospitals, both Government and Private, in the vicinity of the station where the pregnant women can be shifted.

Allopathic doctors travelling as passengers are given 10% concession in train fares as an incentive to motivate them to render medical assistance to the travelling public in case of any emergency. Their services can be utilized to attend to pregnant women. Further, station staff are authorized to summon a railway medical officer 'on call' to attend to the needy passengers. In addition, Augmented First Aid boxes with wider range of medicines, disposable medical materials, etc., have been provided with the Train Superintendents/ Pantry car Managers of Rajdhani/Shatabdi Express Trains and on nominated long distance Mail/Express trains.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

#### **Regularisation of Services of Casual Employees**

5913. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of casual employees working in the Indian Airlines at Guwahati airport, category-wise;

(b) whether any proposal for permanent absorption of these casual employees is under consideration of the Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the verdict given by the Industrial Tribunal in this regard in 1999 is yet to be implemented by the Government;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(f) how the Government proposes to streamline the service conditions of these employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) On an average, 19 casuals are being engaged everyday at Guwahati airport which includes 4 casuals as Safaiwala, 1 as Driver and remaining as Helpers in various departments.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) The Industrial Tribunal, Guwahati had passed an order in 1999 that the services of the casual workers at Guwahati airport may be regularized on seniority basis and in a phased manner as and when regular vacancies arise. Since February, 2000 there continues to be a complete freeze on fresh recruitment, except in the operational and critical areas, in order to reduce manpower to aircraft ratio.

(f) As and when it is decided to fill up the posts, the claims of casual workers would also be considered in accordance with the orders of the Industrial Tribunal, Guwahati.

[Translation]

#### **Allotment of Petrol Pumps to Families of Martyrs**

5914. SHRIMATI KARUNA SHUKLA:  
DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

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

(a) whether the Government has discontinued the scheme of allotment of petrol retail outlets or gas agencies on priority basis to the families of the martyrs;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of applications received for allotment of retail outlets or gas agencies under the said quota during the last three years; and

(d) the number of applicants who have been allotted retail outlets and gas agencies during the said period, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) and (b) After review of the rationale for a separate Discretionary Quota Scheme (DQS) for allotment of RO dealerships/SKO-LDO dealerships/LPG distributorships, Government has decided to disband the Scheme vide its order dated 26-12-2006, as all eligible applicants falling under the DQS categories can also

apply under normal selection process for RO/SKO-LDO dealerships/LPG distributorships wherein a reservation of 8% is kept for 'Defence' (DC) category and another 8% reservation for 'Para-military/Police/Government personnel (PMP) category is provided.

(c) 1742 and 457 applications for allotment of RO dealerships and LPG distributorships were received respectively under the discretionary quota scheme since the revival of the Scheme in the year 2001.

(d) During the last three years, i.e., 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07, 32 RO dealerships and 11 LPG distributorships have been allotted under discretionary quota scheme by the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL).

[English]

#### **Development of Sabrimala**

5915. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposals for development of Sabrimala and Erumely in Kerala have been prioritised for grant of Central financial assistance during the current financial year;

(b) if so, the amount sanctioned or proposed to be sanctioned for the purpose; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to provide adequate facilities for the pilgrims there?

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

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The development and promotion of places of tourist interest/pilgrim centre is primarily undertaken by the State Governments themselves. However, the Ministry of Tourism also provides funds for creating facilities at important tourism sites/pilgrim centres. In 1998-99, Ministry of Tourism has sanctioned a project for construction of Pilgrim Facilitation Centre at Sabrimala

for an amount of Rs.104.89 lakh. The project has since been completed.

#### **Railways Policy Framework**

5916. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a need for strategic shift in the objectives of the Railways so that it can regain some of the market it has lost over the past few decades to other competing modes of transport;

(b) if so, whether Railways policy framework has some inherent weaknesses that prevent its healthy growth and prevent the railways from competing with the road sector;

(c) if so, the facts thereof; and

(d) the corrective measures proposed to be taken in this regard?

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

(b) and (c) Railways are bulk carriers and competitive for carrying goods over long distances. Over short distances multiple handling of traffic makes railways uneconomical.

(d) Railways are working for multi-modal logistics through container movement, facilitating rail siding construction, developing warehousing at rail terminals. Discount in empty flow direction is also being given to make it competitive with other modes of transport.

#### **Welfare of Mentally Retarded Street Children**

5917. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is implementing any scheme for the welfare of the mentally retarded street children in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the assistance being extended by the State Governments in implementing the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): (a) to (c) A welfare scheme "An Integrated Programme for Street Children" which includes mentally retarded street children is implemented to provide shelter, nutrition, health care, education and recreational facilities. Monitoring of the scheme is done by the State Governments.

#### **Extension of Nizamuddin-Hubli Express upto Hospet**

5918. SHRI K. VIRUPAKSHAPPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is persistent demand from the people of North Karnataka for extending Nizamuddin-Hubli Express upto Hospet;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Railways thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Extension of Nizamuddin-Hubli Express upto Hospet is not feasible at present due to operational constraints.

[Translation]

#### **Medical Facilities to Railway Employees**

5919. SHRI HEMMAL MURMU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have made arrangement

for hospital and medical facility in each of the Railway Divisions with a view to provide medical care to Railway employees, alongwith their dependents, retired employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is shortage of specialist doctors in the hospitals of various Railway Divisions;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Railways have provided medical facilities to the Railway employees and retired Railway employees in the Central Government Health Scheme and recognized private hospitals besides the Railway hospitals; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

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

(b) A statement is attached.

(c) and (d) Shortage of specialist doctors in Railway hospitals, is made good by following two schemes:

1. Honorary Visiting Specialists: Specialist doctors from private sector are engaged to work in railway hospitals as specialists for two hours a day for 6 or 4 or 2 days in a week.
2. Hospital in-charges are given authority to call specialist doctors from private specialist services on case to case basis.

(e) Yes, Sir. Only through private recognized Hospitals.

(f) Does not arise.

## Statement

## Medical Facilities to Railway Employees

| Rly.            | Name of the Division | No. of Railway Hospitals including Central Hospitals and other extra Divisional Hospitals which are physically located in the jurisdiction of the division | Name of the Railways Hospitals                            | No. of indoor beds | Number of Health Units including extra Divisional Health Units which are physically located in the jurisdiction of the division | Name of the Pvt. Hospitals recognised where patients of this division are normally referred |
|-----------------|----------------------|--|---|--------------------|---|---|
| 1               | 2                    | 3  | 4   | 5                  | 6   | 7   |
| Central Railway | Mumbai               | 3  | Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar Memorial-Central Hospital/Byculla | 366                |   | 1. Tata Memorial Hospital/Parel   |
| Central Railway | Mumbai               |  | Divisional Hospital/Kalyan                                | 120                |   | 2. Jaslok Hospital/Mumbai   |
| Central Railway | Mumbai               |  | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Igatpuri                          | 40                 |   | 3. Charak Clinic Nursing Home/Mumbai  |
|                 |                      |  |   |                    | 11  | 4. Wockhardt Hospital/Kalyan  |
|                 |                      |  |   |                    |   | 5. Jairam Hospital and Research Center/Nasik Road   |
|                 |                      |  |   |                    |   | 6. Shradha Hospital/Lonawala  |
| Central Railway | Bhusawal             |  | Divisional Hospital/Bhusawal                              | 250                |   | 1. Jairam Hospital and Research Center/Nasik Road   |

|                 |         |   |  |     |    |   |
|-----------------|---------|---|--|-----|----|---|
|                 |         | 2 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Manmad                           | 32  | 10 | 2. Indo American Cardiovascular Centre Jalgaon                              |
| Central Railway | Nagpur  |   |  |     |    |   |
|                 |         | 2 | Divisional Hospital/Nagpur                               | 185 | 6  | 1. Arneja Heart Institute/Nagpur  |
|                 |         |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Amli                             | 20  |    | 2. Rashtra Sant Tukdoji Regional Cancer Hospital                            |
| Central Railway | Pune    | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Pune                                 | 50  | 3  | 1. King Edward Memorial Hospital/Pune                                       |
| Central Railway | Solapur |   | Divisional Hospital/Solapur                              | 89  |    | 1. Ashwini Sahakari Rugnalaya and Research Centre/ Solapur                  |
|                 |         | 3 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Kurduwadi                        | 34  |    |   |
|                 |         |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Daund                            | 30  |    |   |
| Central Railway | Sealdah |   | B.R. Singh Hospital-Central Hospital/Sealdah             | 461 | 14 | 1. Apollo Gleneagles Hospital/Kolkata                                       |
|                 |         | 2 | Railway Work-Shop Hospital/Kanchrapara                   | 220 | 4  | 2. Peerless Hospital/Kolkata  |
|                 |         |   |  |     |    | 3. Rabindra Nath Tagore International Institute of Cardiac Sciences/Kolkata |
| Eastern Railway | Howrah  |   | (Orthopaedic Hospital) Howrah Divisional Hospital/Howrah | 179 | 12 |   |
|                 |         | 2 | Workshop Hospital/Lituah                                 | 101 | 1  |   |
| Eastern Railway | Asansol | 2 | Divisional Hospital/Asansol                              | 220 | 6  |   |
|                 |         |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Andal                            | 50  | 2  |   |
| Eastern Railway | Malda   | 2 | Divisional Hospital/Malda                                | 100 | 3  |   |
|                 |         |   | Workshop Hospital/Jamalpur                               | 252 | 4  |   |

| 1                    | 2            | 3 | 4  | 5         | 6      | 7   |
|----------------------|--------------|---|--|-----------|--------|---|
| Eastern Railway      | Chittaranjan | 1 | Chittaranjan Locomotive Workshop/Production Unit Hospital/Chittaranjan     | 197       | 6      |   |
| East Central Railway | Danapur      | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Danapur  | 202       | 8      | 1. Jeevak Hospital/Patna<br>2. Dr. Ruban Memorial Hospital/Patna  |
| East Central Railway | Mugalsarai   | 2 | Divisional Hospital/Mugalsarai<br>Sub-Divisional Hospital/Gaya             | 160<br>57 | 6      |   |
| East Central Railway | Dhanbad      | 2 | Divisional Hospital/Dhanbad<br>Sub-Divisional Hospital/Patratu             | 130<br>30 | 16     |   |
| East Central Railway | Sonepur      | 2 | Divisional Hospital/Sonepur  | 80        | 5      |   |
| Central Railway      |              | 2 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Garjara  | 56        |        |   |
| East Central Railway | Samastipur   | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Samastipur   | 163       | 5      |   |
| East Central Railway | Khurda Road  | 2 | Central Hospital/Mancheswar/Bhubaneswar<br>Divisional Hospital/Khurda Road | 20<br>80  | 1<br>9 | 1. Kalinga Hospital/Bhubaneswar<br>2. Yashoda Hospital/Vishakhapatnam<br>3. Seven Hills Hospital/Vishakhapatnam<br>4. Nehru Shatabdi Hospital/MCI Teacher |

|                       |           |   |   |     |    |   |
|-----------------------|-----------|---|---|-----|----|---|
| East Coast<br>Railway | Waltair   | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Bhubaneswar             | 154 | 14 | 1. Kalinga Hospital/Bhubaneswar               |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 2. Yashoda Hosiptal/Vishakhapatnam            |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 3. Seven Hills Hospital/Vishakhapatnam        |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 4. Apollo Hospital/Vishakhapatnam             |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 5. NMDC Hospital, Kirandul                    |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 6. NMDC-Apollo Hospital, Bachel               |
| East Coast<br>Railway | Sambalpur | 1 | Divisional Hospital, Sambalpur              | 35  | 4  | 1. Kalinga Hospital/Bhubaneswar               |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 2. Yashoda Hospital/Secunderabad              |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 3. Seven Hills Hospital/Vishakhapatnam        |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 4. Christian Hospital/Bissam Cuttack          |
| Northern<br>Railway   | Delhi     | 2 | Northern Railway Central Hospital/New Delhi | 392 | 23 | 1. R.G. Cancer Hospital                       |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 2. Anand Hospital                             |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 3. Dharamshila Cancer Institute, New Delhi    |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 4. Apollo Hospital, Delhi                     |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 5. Batra Hospital/Delhi                       |
|                       |           |   |   |     |    | 6. Lions/Fortis Heamodialysis Hospital, Delhi |



[illegible]



| 1                     | 2          | 3 | 4   | 5   | 6  | 7  |
|-----------------------|------------|---|---|-----|----|--|
| North Eastern Railway | Gorakhpur  | 1 | Lalit Narayan Mishra Central Hospital/Gorakhpur | 366 | 3  |  |
| North Eastern Railway | Izzatnagar | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Izzatnagar                  | 136 | 10 | 1. Sri Ram Murti Samark Institute of Medical Sciences/Bareilly |
| North Eastern Railway | Lucknow    | 2 | Divisional Hospital/Lucknow                     | 82  | 7  | 1. Heart and Lung institute/New Delhi                          |
| North Eastern Railway | Varanasi   | 2 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Gonda                   | 70  |    |  |
| North Eastern Railway | Varanasi   | 2 | Cancer Research Institute/Varanasi              | 137 | 7  | 1. Tata Memorial/Mumbai  |
| North Eastern Railway | Maligaon   | 1 | Diesel Locomotive Works/Varanasi                | 105 | 2  |  |
| North Eastern Railway | Maligaon   | 1 | Central Hospital, Guwahati                      | 317 | 6  | 1. Guwahati Neurological Research Centre/Guwahati              |
| North Eastern Railway | Katihar    | 3 | Divisional Hospital/Katihar                     | 130 | 4  | 2. Sankardev Nethralaya Hospital/Guwahati                      |
| North Eastern Railway | Katihar    |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/New Jalpaiguri          | 100 | 5  |  |
| North Eastern Railway |            |   | 20 Bedded Hospital/Tindania                     | 20  | 0  |  |
| North Eastern Railway | Alipurdwar | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Alipurdwar                  | 111 | 5  |  |

|                             |          |   |   |     |    |   |
|-----------------------------|----------|---|---|-----|----|---|
| Northeast Frontier Railways | Rangiya  | 2 | Divisional Hospital/New Bongai-gaon       | 75  | 6  |   |
|                             |          |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Ranga-para        | 40  | 2  |   |
| Notheast Frontier Railway   | Lumding  | 2 | Divisional Hospital/Lumding               | 142 | 5  |   |
|                             |          |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Badarpur          | 57  | 6  |   |
| Northeast Frontier Railway  | Tinsukia | 2 | Divisional Hospital/Dibrugarh             | 90  | 6  |   |
|                             |          |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/New Tinsukia      | 25  | 0  |   |
| North Western Railway       | Jaipur   | 3 | Central Hospital/Jaipur                   | 86  | 4  | 1. Tongia Heart and General Hospital, Jaipur            |
|                             |          |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Rewari            | 20  |    | 2. Santokhba Durlabhji Memorial Hospital/Jaipur         |
|                             |          |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Bandikui          | 18  |    | 3. Bhagwan Mahaveer Cancer and Research Hospital/Jaipur |
| North Western Railway       | Ajmer    | 3 | Divisional Hospital/Ajmer                 | 230 | 11 | 1. Global Hospital, Mt Abu                              |
|                             |          |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Abu Road          | 24  |    |   |
|                             |          |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Rana Pratap Nagar | 9   |    | 1. Delhi Heart and Lung Hospital, New Delhi             |
| North Western Railway       | Bikaner  | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Bikaner               | 100 | 8  | 1. Delhi Heart and Lung Institute, New Delhi            |
| North Western Railway       | Jodhpur  | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Jodhpur               | 117 | 8  | 1. Dr. Raj Memorial Hospital                            |

| 1                | 2                 | 3  | 4  | 5   | 6  | 7  |
|------------------|-------------------|----|--|-----|----|--|
| Southern Railway | Chennai           | 2  | Central Hospital/Perambur/<br>Chennai        | 505 |    | 2. Voluntary Health Services                   |
|                  |                   |    | Integrat Coach Factory Hospital/<br>Perambur | 101 |    | 3. Sankara Nethralaya                          |
|                  |                   |    |  |     |    | 4. Guest Hospital                              |
|                  |                   |    |  |     |    | 5. Sri Ramachandra Medical<br>College Hospital |
|                  |                   |    |  |     |    | 6. Chennai Kaliappa Hospital                   |
|                  |                   |    |  |     |    | 7. Cancer Institute, Adyar                     |
| Southern Railway | Chennai           | 1  | Divisional Hospital/Arakkonam                | 50  | 11 | 1. G.V.N. Cancer Institute                     |
| Southern Railway | Tiruchchirappalli | 2  | Divisional Hospital/Tiruchchirappalli        | 197 | 8  |  |
|                  |                   |    | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Villupuram           | 26  |    |  |
| Southern Railway | Madurai           | 1  | Divisional Hospital/Madurai                  | 115 | 10 |  |
| Southern Railway | Palghat           | 4  | Divisional Hospital/Palghat                  | 106 | 7  |  |
|                  |                   |    | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Shoranur             | 24  |    |  |
|                  |                   |    | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Erode                | 30  |    |  |
|                  |                   |    | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Podanur              | 28  |    |  |
| Southern Railway | Trivandrum        | 1. | Divisional Hospital/Trivandrum               | 50  | 6  | 1. Lissie Hospital/Ernakulam                   |
|                  |                   |    |  |     |    | 2. Vijayakumaramenon Hospital/<br>Ernakulam    |



| 1                     | 2             | 3 | 4                                  | 5   | 6  | 7   |
|-----------------------|---------------|---|------------------------------------|-----|----|---|
| South Central Railway | Nanded        | 1 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Purna      | 25  | 4  | 1. Jaya Hospital, Kazipet   |
| South Central Railway | Secunderabad  |   |                                    |     | 9  | 1. St. Joseph Hospital/Guntur   |
| South Central Railway | Guntur        |   |                                    |     | 9  | 2. Lalitha Super Speciality Hospital                                      |
| South Eastern Railway | Garden Reach  | 1 | Central Hospital/Garden Reach      | 303 |    |   |
| South Eastern Railway | Khargpur      | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Kharagpur      | 340 |    | 1. Shankar Nethralaya/Chennai.  |
| South Eastern Railway | Chakradharpur | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Chakradharpur  | 100 |    | 2. Ispat General Hospital/Rourkela  |
| South Eastern Railway | Adra          | 1 | Divisional Hospital/Adra           | 198 | 38 | 3. TELCO Hospital/Jamshedpur  |
| South Eastern Railway | Ranchi        | 1 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Tata       | 55  |    | 4. Kriburu SAIL Hospital/Chakradharpur                                    |
| South Eastern Railway |               | 1 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Bondamunda | 65  |    | 5. Rabindranath Tagor International Institute of Cardiac Science/ Kolkata |

|                                  |          |   |  |     |   |   |
|----------------------------------|----------|---|--|-----|---|---|
| South East<br>Central<br>Railway | Bilaspur | 1 | Central Hospital/Bilaspur                              | 104 | 6 | 6. HEC Hospital/Ranchi                          |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 1. Apollo Hosital/Bilaspur                      |
| South East<br>Central<br>Railway | Bilaspur | 1 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Shahdol                        | 10  | 6 | 1. SECL Hospital, KRBA and Gevera Road/Bilaspur |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 2. Chirstian Hospital                           |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 3. SECL Hospital in CIC area Bilaspur.          |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 4. Divisional Hospital/Bishrampur               |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 5. Central Hospital/Manendragarh                |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 6. Regional Hospital/Churcha Colliery           |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 7. Regional Hospital/Khurasia                   |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 8. Indoor Hospital, Korea                       |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 9. Regional Hospital/Jamuna and Kotma           |
| South East<br>Central<br>Railway | Raipur   | 1 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Raipur/Bhillai Marshaling Yard | 30  | 4 | 1. 1. MMI Hospital, Raipur                      |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 2. MGM Eye Institute, Raipur                    |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 3. SAIL Hospital, Sector 9, Bhilai              |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 4. Escort Heart Center Raipur                   |
| South East<br>Central<br>Railway | Nagpur   | 1 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Nainpur                        | 10  | 8 | 1. Armeja Heart Institute, Nagpur               |
|                                  |          |   |  |     |   | 2. Christanand Hospital, Braham-pur/Nagpur      |





|                            |           |   |  |     |    |   |
|----------------------------|-----------|---|--|-----|----|---|
| Western<br>Railway         | Mumbai    | 1 | Sub-Divisional Hospital/Valsad                 | 42  | 12 |   |
| Western<br>Railway         | Baroda    | 1 | Railway Divisional Hospital/<br>Pratap Nagar   | 96  | 7  | 1. Bhailal Amin General Hospital/<br>Baroda   |
| Western<br>Railway         | Ratlam    | 1 | Railway Divisional Hospital/<br>Ratlam         | 125 | 9  | 1. Choithram Hospital and<br>Research Centre/Ratlam<br><br>2. Bhailal Amin General Hospital/<br>Baroda                  |
| Western<br>Railway         | Ahmedabad | 2 | Railway Divisional Hospital/<br>Sabarmati      | 50  | 12 | 1. Apollo Hospital/Gandhinagar  |
|                            |           |   | Railway Sub-Divisional Hospital/<br>Gandhidham | 17  |    | 2. Institute of Kidney Diseases<br>and Research Centre/<br>Ahmedabad  |
| Western<br>Railway         | Bhavnagar | 1 | Railway Divisional Hospital/<br>Bhavnagar      | 107 | 10 |   |
| Western<br>Railway         | Rajkot    | 1 | Railway Divisional Hospital/<br>Rajkot         | 79  | 5  | 1. Nathalal Parekh Cancer Institute/<br>Rajkot<br><br>2. B.T. Savami Kidney Hospital/<br>Rajkot                         |
| Western<br>Railway         | Dahod     | 1 | Main Hospital/Dahod                            | 130 |    |   |
| West<br>Central<br>Railway | Jabalpur  | 2 | Central Hospital/Jabalpur                      | 125 | 7  | 1. Jabalpur Hospital and Research<br>Centre, Jabalpur<br><br>2. Jamdar Hospital, Jabalpur<br><br>3. MGM Hospital; Katni |
|                            |           |   | Sub-Divisional Hospital/New<br>Katni Jn.       | 25  |    |   |

| 1                          | 2      | 3   | 4   | 5     | 6   | 7  |
|----------------------------|--------|-----|---|-------|-----|--|
| West<br>Central<br>Railway | Bhopal |     | Divisional Hospital Nishatpura,<br>Bhopal | 60    |     | 1. Jawahar Lal Nehru Cancer<br>Hospital and Research Centre,<br>Bhopal |
|                            |        | 3   | Sub-Divisional Hospital, Itarsi           | 25    | 5   | 2. Bhopal Memorial Hospital and<br>Research Centre, Bhopal             |
| Bhopal                     |        |     | Sub-Divisional Hospital, Bina             | 37    |     | 3. BHEL Kasturba Hospital,   |
| West<br>Central<br>Railway | Kota   | 2   |   | 104   | 7   | 1. Sudha Hospital, Kota  |
|                            |        |     | Sub-Divisional Hospital/<br>Gangapur City | 50    |     |  |
| Total                      |        | 121 |   | 13562 | 586 |  |

*[English]*

**Import of Natural Gas from  
Bangladesh**

5920. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is actively considering to import natural gas from Bangladesh intended to be used in industrial units of West Bengal and other Eastern States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

*[Translation]*

**Yatri Niwas**

5921. SHRI SUBHASH SURESHCHANDRA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of 'Yatri Niwas' particularly in backward and rural areas, as on date, location-wise and State-wise;

(b) whether there is any proposal to construct more 'Yatri Niwas' in different State during this financial year; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The State-wise and location-wise details of the Yatri Niwas sanctioned by the Ministry of Tourism during the 8th and 9th Five Year Plans are given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) and (c) The scheme of the Ministry of Tourism for providing Central Financial Assistance for construction of Yatri Niwas has been discontinued from the 10th Plan onwards.

**Statement**

*Projects Sanctioned by Ministry of Tourism for Yatri Niwas during 8th and 9th Plans*

| Sl. No. | Name of the State/UT | No. of Projects | Location  |
|---------|----------------------|-----------------|---|
| 1       | 2                    | 3               | 4   |
| 1.      | Andarnan and Nicobar | 1               | (i) Karmtang  |
| 2.      | Andhra Pradesh       | 7               | (i) Arraku Valley (ii) Vishakaptnam, (iii) Tirupati (iv) Yodagirigutta, (v) Horsely Hills (vi) Tirumala-Tirupathi (vii) Nagarjuna Sagar |
| 3.      | Arunachal Pradesh    | 2               | (i) Bamneng (ii) Roing (Dibang) Valley  |
| 4.      | Assam                | 3               | (i) Barpeta (ii) Bhuban Hills Silchar (iii) Batadrawa   |
| 5.      | Himachal Pradesh     | 4               | (i) Deotridh (ii) Jawalamukhi (iii) Bharmour (iv) Dharamshala   |

| 1   | 2                 | 3  | 4  |
|-----|-------------------|----|--|
| 6.  | Jammu and Kashmir | 3  | (i) Vaishno Devi (ii) Baba Rishi (iii) Patnitop  |
| 7.  | Karnataka         | 10 | (i) Dharwar (ii) Gulbarga (iii) Bijapur (iv) Maravanthe (v) Udupi (vi) Hampi (vii) Hassan (viii) Yellamma-nagudda (ix) Sravanabelagola (x) Talakad, Mysore |
| 8.  | Kerala            | 6  | (i) Peermedu (ii) Calicut (iii) Malayattur (iv) Alleppey (v) Kondotti (vi) Kumily  |
| 9.  | Madhya Pradesh    | 1  | (i) Hossangabad  |
| 10. | Maharashtra       | 1  | (i) Jothiba, Kolhapur  |
| 11. | Manipur           | 1  | (i) Imphal   |
| 12. | Orissa            | 4  | (i) Puri (ii) Chandipur (iii) Satpuda (Chilka Lake) (iv) Konark  |
| 13. | Punjab            | 1  | (i) Fatehgarh Sahib  |
| 14. | Tamil Nadu        | 3  | (i) Rameshwaram (ii) Samayapuram (iii) Tiruvannamalai  |
| 15. | Uttarakhand       | 2  | (i) Gauchar (ii) Guptkashi (Rudraprayag)   |
| 16. | West Bengal       | 1  | (i) New Jalpaiguri   |

[English]

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

**Train Service between Bangalore  
and Ernakulam**

5922. SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are considering to start a daily Superfast Inter city train with only Chaircar facility connecting Bangalore and Ernakulam to cater to the need of daily passengers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, sir. There is no such proposal at present.

**Low Cost Petrol Pumps**

5923. SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY:

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY:

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

(a) whether public sector oil marketing companies particularly IOC proposes to open low cost retail outlets in rural areas;

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

(c) the criteria for opening and selection of sites for such outlets in the country; and

(d) the details of such outlets opened and propose

to be opened during 2006-07 and 2007-08 in the country, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA PATEL): (a) to (c) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), viz., Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) are setting up rural retail outlets (such as Kisan Seva Kendra, Hamara Pump, etc.) all over the country to cater to the needs of farmers, agriculturists and other consumers of petrol and diesel in the rural areas. This has been done with the intention of reaching product predominantly HSD, and ensuring quality at the correct price in far-flung areas to meet the rural agricultural demand. These retail outlets are set up at identified rural locations having sufficient potential and found to be economically viable based on survey and feasibility studies.

(d) During the year 2006-07, OMCs have commissioned 1319 such retail outlets and propose to open 2038 such outlets during the year 2007-08.

#### **Wi-Fi Service at Airports**

5924. SHRI E.G. SUGAVANAM: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has any plan to provide Wi-Fi service to all domestic and international airports in the country at free-of-cost for passengers carrying Wi-Fi enabled laptops;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said service is likely to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Government has, at present, no plan to provide free of cost Wi-Fi service at the airports in the country.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

#### **Modernisation of Paradip, Gopalpur and Visakhapatnam Ports**

5925. SHRI B. MAHTAB: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether East Coast Railways have proposed to extend their assistance to modernise the Paradip, Gopalpur and Visakhapatnam ports;

(b) if so, the kind of modernisation works proposed to be taken up by East Coast Railways in these ports;

(c) The time by which the said work is likely to be started and completed; and

(d) the fund provision made by East Coast Railways for the purpose?

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

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

#### **Delay In Delivery of Aircraft Carrier Gorshkov**

5926. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

SHRIMATI MANORAMA MADHAVRAJ:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a big delay in the delivery schedule of the aircraft carrier Gorshkov as reported in the 'Times of India' dated May 02, 2007;

(b) if so, the original schedule of the aircraft carrier delivery;

(c) whether this delay in re-conditioning and delivery of the Gorshkov will involve cost over-run of over \$113 million; and

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

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) to (d) No, Sir. The aircraft carrier is scheduled to be delivered by end 2008. The Russian side has assured at the highest level that the ship will be delivered as per contract. The aircraft carrier is

undergoing necessary repairs/modifications in Russia at present.

The project is being closely monitored by the Empowered Apex Committee headed by the Defence Secretary and the Steering Committee headed by the Controller of Warship Production and Acquisition.

#### **Construction of Tunnels by BRO**

5927. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has proposed to construct tunnels to make Ladakh accessible all year round;

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

(c) the time by which the tunnels are likely to be constructed and its likely benefits thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) Proposal for construction of 8.82 Km long tunnel at Rohtang alongwith approach roads and alternative road to Leh via Darcha-Padam-Nimu has been approved at the cost of Rs. 1355.82 crore.

(c) Works are proposed to be completed by 2013-2014. With the completion of works, the distance between Manali and Leh will reduce by 47 Km and road will be available to users for longer time in the year. This will result in the saving in cost of vehicular operation for all users and cost of Air maintenance for

the Army. This will also give boost to socio-economic development of the region by way of growth in industries related to tourism, agriculture and horticulture in part of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

#### **Bogibeel Bridge Project**

5928. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways are yet to finalize the resources mobilization in respect of executing four railways projects namely Bogibeel Bridge Project, gauge conversion of Rangia-Murkongselek, Azra-Bymihat new line and Dimapur-Kohima new line in the North-East Region cleared by Union Cabinet for execution as National Project;

(b) if so, the present status of these projects;

(c) the reasons for inordinate delay in execution of these projects; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. However, the matter has been taken up for decision on funding of the projects. No time frame for decision is feasible to be given at this stage. However, the works are progressing as per the availability of resources through Budgetary Support. The status of these projects is as under:—

| Name of the Project                   | Status   |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Bogibeel Bridge                       | Land acquisition in North and South Banks taken up. Earthwork, bridgeworks, ballast collection and track linking taken up.   |
| Rangia- Murkongselek gauge conversion | Part detailed estimate for Rangiya-Rangpara North section has been sanctioned. Soil exploration and preparation of plans etc. have been taken up. Tenders for bridges have been processed on Rangiya-Rangpara North section. |
| Azra-Byrnihat new line                | Preparatory works taken up.  |
| Dimapur-Kohima new line               | Preparatory works taken up.  |

**Khajuraho Temples**

5929. SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL:

SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE:

SHRI MILIND DEORA:

Will the Minister of CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the aircraft flying low over the ancient temples of Khajuraho are causing damages to these world heritage monuments as reported in "The Times of India" dated April 15, 2007;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the steps taken or being taken by the Union Government to protect these world heritage monuments from vibration of airlines?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) There were apprehensions that vibration caused by the low flying aircrafts may adversely affect the historic temples of Khajuraho. This was taken up with the airlines and also the Airport Authority of India.

(c) The Airport Authority of India has initiated corrective measures like changes in landing and departure procedures, and various amendments in the Air Traffic Control (ATC) procedures which would minimize the possibility of aircraft flying over these monuments.

*[Translation]***Bio Fuel Manufacturing**

5930. SHRI CHANDRAMANI TRIPATHI:

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL:

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

(a) whether some foreign companies have shown interest in bio-fuel manufactured from Jatropha seed in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government proposes to export this bio-fuel; 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. Ministry of Rural Development, which is the nodal Ministry for production of biodiesel, have reported that no foreign companies have shown interest in bio-fuel manufactured from Jatropha seed in the country.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, which is the nodal Ministry on bio-fuel, have no Proposal to export bio-fuel.

(d) Does not arise.

*[English]***Exploration of Natural Gas in Bay of Bengal**

5931. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received proposals for exploration of natural gas in Bay of Bengal, particularly in the off-shore region of West Bengal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) 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) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government of India has awarded 64 blocks in Krishna Godavari Basin, Cauvery Basin, Mahanadi Basin, Pranrita Godavari Basin, Bengal Offshore and Andaman Basin in the Bay of Bengal, under Pre-NELP and NELP regime.

In the West Bengal Offshore, Government of India has contracted one exploration block namely WB-OSN-2000/1 to Ms ONGC under the second round of NELP



in the Bengal Offshore region in Bay of Bengal, where one exploratory well has been drilled so far. No oil and gas discovery has been made in the block.

ONGC has sought fresh extension for completion of drilling in the Block which is under consideration of the Government.

12.00 hrs.

#### PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): On behalf of Shri Lalu Prasad, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Indian Railway Finance Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Railways for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6585/07]

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): I beg to lay on the Table —

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling, 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 Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6586/07]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering and Winter Sports,

Pahalgam, 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 Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering and Winter Sports, Pahalgam, for the year 2005-2006, along with Audited Accounts.

- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6587/07]

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): I beg to lay on the Table —

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under section 13 of the National Commission of Minorities Act, 1992:—
  - (a) (i) Annual Report of the National Commission for Minorities, New Delhi, for the year 1998-1999.
  - (ii) Action Taken Memorandum on the recommendations contained in the Annual Report of the National Commission for Minorities, New Delhi, for the year 1998-1999.
  - (iii) Review by the Government of the working of the National Commission for Minorities, New Delhi, for the year 1998-1999.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6588/07]

- (b) (i) Annual Report of the National Commission for Minorities, New Delhi, for the year 2004-2005.
- (ii) Action Taken Memorandum on the recommendations contained in the Annual Report of the National Commission for Minorities, New Delhi, for the year 2004-2005.

- (iii) Review by the Government of the working of the National Commission for Minorities, New Delhi, for the year 2004-2005.
- (2) Two statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6589/07]

- (3) A copy of the Report of the Prime Minister's High Level Committee on Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India (in Hindi version only)\*
- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the Hindi version of the Report.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6590/07]

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE  
(SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): I beg to lay on the Table —

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, for the year 2005-2006.
- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, 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 Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath, 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 6591/07]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and

English versions) of the North Central Zone Cultural Centre, Allahabad, 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 North Central Zone Cultural Centre, Allahabad, 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 6592/07]

- (5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Delhi Public Library, New Delhi, for the year 2004-2005, along with Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Delhi Public Library, New Delhi, for the year 2004-2005.

- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6593/07]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY  
OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): 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) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Airline Allied Services Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.
  - (ii) Annual Report of the Airline Allied Services Limited, New Delhi, for the year

\*English version of the Report was laid on 30-11-2006.

[Shri Praful Patel]

2005-2006, along with 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 6594/07]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NARANBHAI RATHWA): Mr. Speaker, 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 Container Corporation of India Limited and the Ministry of Railways, for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6595/07]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Ircon International Limited and the Ministry of Railways, for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6596/07]

- (iii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Rites Limited and the Ministry of Railways, for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6597/07]

- (iv) Memorandum of Understanding between the Konkan Railway Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Railways, for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6598/07]

- (2) A copy of the Report (Hindi and English versions) on the progress made in the intake of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes

against vacancies reserved for them in Recruitment and Promotion Categories on the Railways for the year ending the 31st March, 2005.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6599/07]

- (3) A copy of the Railway Claims Tribunal (Procedure) Amendment Rules, 2007 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 283(E) in Gazette of India dated the 11th April, 2007 under sub-section (3) of section 30 of the Railways Claims Tribunal Act, 1987.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6600/07]

- (4) A copy of the Indian Railways (Open Lines) General (Amendment) Rules, 2007 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 311(E) in Gazette of India dated the 26th April, 2007 under section 199 and the Railways Act, 1989.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6601/07]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): On behalf of Shri Prithviraj Chavan, I beg to lay on the Table —

- (1) A copy of the following papers (Hindi and English version):—

- (i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Uranium Corporation of India Limited and the Department of Atomic Energy for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6602/07]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Electronics Corporation of India Limited and the Department of Atomic Energy for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6603/07]

- (iii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Bharatiya Nabhikiya Vidyut Nigam Limited and the Department of Atomic Energy for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6604/07]

- (iv) Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Rare Earths Limited and the Department of Atomic Energy for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6605/07]

- (v) Memorandum of Understanding between the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited and the Department of Atomic Energy for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6606/07]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M.A.A. FATMI): I beg to lay on the Table —

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Rajasthan Council of Primary Education (Serva Shiksha Abhiyan and District Primary Education Programme), Jaipur, for the year 2004-2005, along with Audited Accounts.
- (ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Rajasthan Council of Primary Education (Serva Shiksha Abhiyan and District Primary Education Programme), Jaipur, for the year 2004-2005.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6607/07]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Council

of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.

- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 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 National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, for the year 2005-2006.

- (4) Two statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6608/07]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): I beg to lay on the Table —

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under Article 151 (1) of the Constitution:—
- (i) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India—Union Government (Civil) (No. 16 of 2007)—Performance Audit of Accelerated Power Development and Reform Programme (Ministry of Power) for the year ended the March, 2006.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6609/07]

- (ii) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India—Union Government (No. 13 of 2007)—Performance Audit of Internal Control in Selected Central Ministries for the year ended the March, 2006.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6610/07]

- (iii) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor

[Shri S.S. Palanimanickam]

General of India—Union Government (Civil) (No. 12 of 2007)—Performance Audit of Passport, Visa and Consular Services (Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs) for the year ended the March, 2006.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6611/07]

- (iv) Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India—Union Government (Civil) (No. 15 of 2007)—Performance Audit of Implementation of Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 and Contract Labour (Regulations and Abolition) Act, 1970 (Ministry of Labour and Employment) for the year ended the March, 2006.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6612/07]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI SUBBULAKSHMI JAGADEESAN): 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 Visually Handicapped, Dehradun, for the year 2004-2005, 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 Visually Handicapped, Dehradun, for the year 2004-2005.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6613/07]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF HEAVY INDUSTRY, MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES. (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): 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 Cement Corporation of India Limited and the Department of Heavy Industry for the year 2006-2007.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6614/07]

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Cement Corporation of India Limited and the Department of Heavy Industry for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6615/07]

- (iii) Memorandum of understanding between the HMT Limited and Department of Heavy Industry, Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises for the year 2007-2008.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6616/07]

- (iv) Memorandum of understanding between the Hindustan Cables 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 6617/07]

- (v) Memorandum of understanding between the Bharat Ophthalmic Glass 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 6618/07]

- (2) 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) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Limited, Durgapur, for the year 2004-2005.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Bharat Ophthalmic Glass Limited, Durgapur, for the year 2004-2005, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

- (3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6619/07]

12.01 hrs.

#### MESSAGE FROM RAJYA SABHA

[English]

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report a message received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha:—

"In accordance with the provisions of rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 16th May, 2007 agreed without any amendment to the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2007 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 7th May, 2007."

12.02 hrs.

#### INDIAN PARLIAMENTARY PARTICIPATION AT THE 115th ASSEMBLY OF INTER- PARLIAMENTARY UNION (IPU)

##### Report

[English]

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I beg to lay on the Table the Report (Hindi and English versions) on Indian Parliamentary participation at the 115th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union held at Geneva (Switzerland) from 16 to 18 October, 2006.

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I believe you have noted this innovation. Now, the Conference Reports are laid on the Table of the House. I hope somebody will read it.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6620/07]

12.02½ hrs.

#### COMMITTEE ON PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

##### Twelfth Report and Minutes

[English]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, I beg to present the Twelfth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Papers Laid on the Table (2006-07) and Minutes relating thereto.

12.03 hrs.

#### STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS

##### Statements

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the Statements (Hindi and English versions) showing further action taken by Government on the recommendations/observations contained in Chapter I and final replies in respect of recommendations/observations contained in Chapter V of the following Action Taken Reports of the Standing Committee on Railways:—

- (1) Third Report on 'Railway Recruitment Policy';
- (2) Twenty-second Report on 'Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation'; and
- (3) Twenty-fifth Report on 'Procurement of Wagons'.

12.04 hrs.

# STANDING COMMITTEE ON CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS

## **Eighteenth and Nineteenth Reports**

*[English]*

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (Ratnagiri): I beg to present a copy each of the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers:—

- (i) Eighteenth Report on 'Demand and Availability of Petrochemicals'; and
- (ii) Nineteenth Report on 'Production, Procurement and Movement of Fertilizers'.

12.05 hrs.

## STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS

- (I) **Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in 8th, 10th and 11th Reports of Standing Committee on Defence\***

*[English]*

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): Sir, I beg to lay the statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 8th, 10th and 11th Reports of the Standing Committee on Defence (14th Lok Sabha) in pursuance of the direction 73A of the hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha vide Lok Sabha Bulletin—Part II dated September 01, 2004.

The 8th Report of the Standing Committee on Defence (14th Lok Sabha) relates to 'Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations contained in the 2nd Report of the Committee (14th Lok Sabha) on the Demands for Grants of Ministry of Defence for the year 2005-2006'. The Report was presented to the Lok

\*Laid on the Table and also placed in Library. See No. LT 6621/07.

Sabha on the 20th March, 2006 and laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on the same day. Action Taken Statement on the recommendations/observations contained in the 8th Report of the Committee was sent to the Standing Committee on Defence on 17th August, 2006.

The 10th Report of the Standing Committee on Defence (14th Lok Sabha) relates to 'Armed Forces Tribunal Bill'. The Draft Bill was originally introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 20th December, 2005 and the same was referred to the Standing Committee on Defence by the hon. Speaker on 23rd December, 2005. The Committee presented its report to the Lok Sabha on 23rd May, 2006 and laid its Report in the Rajya Sabha on the same day.

Since the 10th Report relates to a Bill, no formal Action Taken Report is required to be sent to the Standing Committee on Defence as moving the Amendment Notice based on the recommendations of the Standing Committee on Defence will be the Action Taken Report in this case. The recommendations made by the Standing Committee on Defence have been processed in consultation with the Services Headquarters and the draft Cabinet Note circulated. Comments have been received from different quarters including Ministry of Law and Justice. The points raised by the Ministry of Law and Justice have been referred to the learned Attorney general of India for his expert opinion. Based on the advice of the learned Attorney General and comments received from other quarters, a revised draft Cabinet Note will be finalized and the Amendment Notice moved accordingly.

The 11th Report of the Standing Committee on Defence relates to Demands for Grants of Ministry of Defence for 2006-07. The Report was presented to the Lok Sabha on 23rd May, 2006 and laid in the Rajya Sabha on the same day. Action Taken Statements on the recommendations contained in the 11th Report of the Standing Committee on Defence was sent to the Committee on 14th December, 2006 after seeking extension and Updated Action Statements were again sent on the 15th February, 2007.

The present status of implementation of the various recommendations made by the Committee in their 8th and 11th Report is indicated in the Annexures I and II to my Statement which is laid on the Table of the House. I would not like to take the valuable time of the House to read out all the contents of these Annexures. I would request that these may be considered as read.

12.05¼ hrs.

- (ii) **Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in 16th Report of the Standing Committee on Coal and Steel on Demands for Grants (2006-07), pertaining to the Ministry of Mines\***

*[Translation]*

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI SIS RAM OLA): Mr. Speaker Sir, in pursuance of the direction of hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha, I am giving my statement regarding the implementation of recommendations contained in 16th report of the Standing Committee on Coal and Steel.

The 16th report of the Standing Committee on Coal and Steel has been laid in Lok Sabha on 23-5-2006 which pertained to the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Mines for the year 2006-07. The details of the action taken have been sent to the office of the Committee on 21-11-06 and 12-12-06. The 16th report of the Committee contained 13 recommendations on which action was required to be taken by the Government.

Present status of implementation indicated in the Annexure-I to my statement which has been laid on the Table of the House. I would not like to take the valuable time of the House to read out the contents given in Annexure-I and I would request that this may be considered as having read.

\*Laid on the Table and also placed in Library. See No. LT 6622/07.

12.05¼ hrs.

- (iii) **Status of implementation of the recommendations contained in 94th and 105th Reports of Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture on Demands for Grants (2005-06 and 2006-07) pertaining to The Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways (Department of Shipping)\***

*[English]*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA): Sir, on behalf of my colleague, Shri T.R. Baalu, I beg to lay the statement.

In pursuance of rule 389 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha (Eleventh Edition) and direction 73A issued vide Lok Sabha Bulletin—Part II dated September 1, 2004, I am making this Statement on the status of implementation of Recommendations contained in the 94th and 105th Report of the Department-Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture.

The Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism and Culture had held its meeting on 22nd February, 2006 and 19th May, 2006 to consider 94th and 105th Reports respectively. The Committee had also taken the Oral Evidence of officers of the Department. The 94th Report was presented to the Rajya Sabha on 27-2-2006 and was laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha on 27-2-2006. The 105th Report was presented to the Rajya Sabha on 22-5-2006 and was laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha on 22-5-2006.

I am also laying down on the Table of the House a Statement (Part I and Part II) giving the status of implementation of those recommendations contained in the 94th and 105th Reports where action is yet to be completed.

\*Laid on the Table and also placed in Library. See No. LT 6623/07.



12.05½ hrs.

**(iv) Status of Implementation of the recommendations contained in 21st Report of Standing Committee on Agriculture on Demands for Grants (2006-07), pertaining to the Ministry of Food Processing Industries\***

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SUBODH KANT SAHAY): Sir, I beg to lay the statement on status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 21st Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (14th Lok Sabha) in pursuance of the direction 73A of hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha vide Lok Sabha Bulletin—Part II dated 1st September, 2004.

The 21st Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (14th Lok Sabha) was presented to the Lok Sabha on 19-5-2006. The Report relates to examination of Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries for the year 2006-07.

An Action Taken Note on recommendations/ observations contained in the Report of the Committee has been sent to the Standing Committee on Agriculture on 19-12-2006. The ATN has now been updated and revised ATN is in the Annexure.

There are eight recommendations made by the Committee in the said Report where action is called for on the part of the Government. These recommendations mainly pertain to various issues relating to promotion of food processing industries such as provision of necessary infrastructure facilities, budgetary allocation and expenditure of the Ministry and schemes for infrastructure development, technology upgradation, Quality control labs, backward and forward linkages and generic advertisement, etc.

Present status of implementation of various recommendations made by the Committee and reported

\*Laid on the Table and also placed in Library. See No. LT 6624/07

to the Committee is indicated in the Annexure to my statement and the same is laid on the Table of the House. I would not like to take the valuable time of the House to read out all the contents given in the Annexure. I would request that this may be considered as having read.

12.06 hrs.

**(v) Status of Implementation of the recommendations contained in 15th Report of Standing Committee on Coal and Steel pertaining to the Ministry of Coal\***

*[English]*

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): Sir, I beg to lay the statement on status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 15th Report of Parliamentary Standing Committee on Coal and Steel in pursuance of the direction 73A of hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha vide Lok Sabha Bulletin—Part II dated 1st September, 2004.

The 15th Report of the Standing Committee on Coal and Steel (14th Lok Sabha) was presented to the Lok Sabha on 23-5-2006. Action taken statements on the recommendations/observations contained in the report of the Committee had been sent to the Standing Committee on Coal and Steel on 21-8-2006.

There are 12 recommendations made by the Committee in the said report where action is called for on the part of the Government. These recommendations mainly pertain to the issues like Fund utilization, Implementation of projects, Formulation of projects, Modernization of washeries, Setting up of new washeries, Development of North-Eastern Coalfields, Formulation of Rehabilitation and Resettlement Policy and Utilisation of heavy Earth Moving Machinery.

The present status of implementation of the various recommendations made by the Committee is indicated

\*Laid on the Table and also placed in Library. See No. LT 6625/07

in the annexure to my statement which is laid on the Table of the House. I would not like to take the valuable time of the House to read out all the contents of this Annexure. I would request that this may be considered as read.

12.06½ hrs.

**(vi) Status of Implementation of the recommendations contained in 21st and 24th Reports of Standing Committee on Railways\***

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): Sir, I beg to lay the statement on the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in the 21st and 24th Reports of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Railways in pursuance of the direction 73A of hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha vide Lok Sabha Bulletin—Part II dated 1st September, 2004.

The 21st Report of the Committee on 'Terminal Facilities in Metropolitan Cities' presented to the Lok Sabha on 25-7-2006 contained 11 recommendations and Action Taken Notes thereon were furnished to the Committee on 27-2-2007 (English version) and on 6-3-2007 (Hindi version).

The 24th Report of the Committee on 'Land Management' presented to the Lok Sabha on 28-11-2006 contained 11 recommendations and Action Taken Notes thereon have been furnished to the Committee on 18-1-2007 (both English and Hindi versions).

Statements showing details of all the recommendations contained in these Reports and implementation status thereof are enclosed. Since the statements are voluminous, I request that the same may be taken as read.

\*Laid on the Table and also placed in Library. See No. LT 6626/07.

12.06½ hrs.

**(vii) Status of Implementation of the recommendations contained in 44th Report of Standing Committee on Finance\***

THE MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): Sir, I beg to lay the statement on the status of implementation of recommendations contained in the 44th Report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance in pursuance of the direction 73A of hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha vide Lok Sabha Bulletin—Part II dated 1st September, 2004.

The Standing Committee on Finance examined the Competition (Amendment) Bill, 2006 and presented its forty-fourth Report to the Lok Sabha on December 12, 2006. The report contains a number of recommendations on the proposals contained in the said Bill. The recommendations of the Committee on the said Bill have been considered by Ministry of Company Affairs in consultation with other concerned Ministries/Departments. Proposals for amendment to the Competition Act, 2002, after appropriate approvals, would be moved through a revised amendment Bill, simultaneously withdrawing the Competition (Amendment) Bill, 2006.

12.07 hrs.

## SUBMISSIONS BY MEMBERS

**(i) Re: Dera Sacha Sauda**

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: Now we will come to the important matters. Dr. Ratan Singh Ajnala to speak.

*[Translation]*

\*\*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA (Taran Taran): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for the opportunity given to me to raise this important matter concerning Punjab.

Sir, for the last three days, Punjab is burning. The

\*Laid on the Table and also placed in Library. See No. LT 6627/07.

\*\*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi.

[Dr. Rattan Singh Ajnala]

in charge of Sachha Sauda Sect \* ...is responsible for the volatile situation in Punjab today. He donned the attire of our respected tenth Guru Gobind Singhji and misled his followers into believing that he was delivering 'Amrit' (nectar) to them like Guru Gobind Singhji. This act has hurt the Sikh sentiments not only in Punjab and India, but throughout the world. The Sikhs are outraged by this act. It is an insult to the Sikhs. That is why Sikhs are protesting throughout the world.

Sir, who is this man named \*....Let me tell you, Sir, he is the in charge of Saccha Sauda Sect \* and CBI cases are pending against him....(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: That will not go on record. There is a procedure. How can you say it? You can refer to some incident. How can you call somebody like that?

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: You delete that.

\*\*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA: Sir, CBI enquiry is being held against him.

(Interruptions)\*...

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If all of you speak together, how can I hear? I do not know what is the problem.

[Translation]

\*\*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA: Sir, during the recent elections in Punjab, the Congress Party sought his support. He openly supported the Congress. He issued an edict that people should help Congress win the elections in Punjab.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, may I request you to please speak one by one so that I can hear? Why are all of you standing? Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I want to hear him. If all of you stand up, how can I hear him?

[Translation]

you please sit down. Let him speak.

...(Interruptions)

\*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA : Sir, the Congress Party is supporting this man. If Punjab is burning today, Congress is responsible for it. People are dying in Punjab.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want the House to run? If you want the House to run, please co-operate. I do not know how it can be done.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

\*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA: Sir, CBI cases are pending against this man.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot follow what you are saying.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let me hear what he is saying. I cannot hear him.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Ask your friends to take their seats. Ask you hon. Members to take their seats. I cannot hear you.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

\*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA: Sir, Punjab was bleeding for twenty years.\*\*

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\*Not recorded.

\*\*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi.

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\*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi.

\*\*Not recorded.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No, that cannot be done. That will be deleted. You are going much beyond what is allowed. That is deleted.

(Interruptions)\*...

[Translation]

\*\*DR. RATTAN SINGH AJNALA: Sir, I appeal to you to ensure that upright CBI officers are deputed to investigate cases against \* He should be put behind bars so that the situation in Punjab becomes normal again. CBI should not be manipulated to help him.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy.

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi):

(Interruptions)\*...

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have not called you.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): He does not know ...(Interruptions) He stands up ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No, I have not allowed him. Nothing will be recorded. Only Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy's statement will be recorded.

(Interruptions)\*...

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Bihari Labourers are being selectively hacked to death ...(Interruptions)

\*Not recorded.

\*\*English translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Speak one by one.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): There is a privilege motion notice which has been given. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No, you are not connected with this matter. There is a procedure.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot force me to call you immediately.

ADV. SURESH KURUP (Kottayam): Sir, I have been giving notice for the last three or four days. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: So what? By interrupting, you are making your case difficult.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Sir, there is a privilege motion...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I do not think that anybody is serious about this House. Anybody can stand up at any time and make any statement.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Sir, I am seeking your leave, I am seeking your consent. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want the House to run or not? Please tell me.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Every day the House is getting adjourned. Matters cannot be taken up. The list cannot be dealt with. I do not know what is going on in this House. You do not want the House to function.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: What are you saying?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will be recorded. Not one word will be recorded. Only Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy's statement will be recorded.

(Interruptions)\*...

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Pur): Hon. Speaker, Sir, ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will see that if there is anything unparliamentary, that will be deleted. I cannot even hear you. How can I decide whether you are saying something relevant or irrelevant.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I cannot compel him to answer.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Will you please sit down?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Who will decide it? You are all dictating! Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: How would I know if the hon. Minister is responding. I am looking at him. How do I know that he wants to respond? You are shouting all the time.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, you may speak now. I did not know that you are interested to respond.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: There is a limit to everything.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Then, listen to the hon. Minister, if you are so interested.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL): Sir, Sikh religion is a revered religion. It is not that only people following Sikh religion respect it. All of us, people following other religions also respect this religion very much. Not only in our country but also in other countries this religion is revered. If anything is spoken against such religion or hon. Gurus of such religion people get hurt and we can understand that we are required to work in this very perspective. Nobody can support whatever has happened here but I would like to say that whatever action is to be taken should be taken in a sensible and effective manner so that the reverence of the people for Guru Gobind Singhji, the Guru of Sikh religion and unity of the people may be kept intact. In this regard we have talked to the Governments and Chief Ministers of Punjab and Haryana. They have told that they would take necessary action. The Chief Minister of both the States have said this. They will take action required by the law and on our part we shall provide all the necessary support in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing? Please sit down. Nothing will be recorded.

...(Interruptions)\*

MD. SALIM (Calcutta-North East): Please do not get emotional. ...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL: Sir, whether it is a case of state police, CBI or any other agency, the law will take its course and necessary action will be taken as required by the law.

Sir, I would like to make an appeal that if any controversy is created in respect of any person, religion or party, we must try to resolve it and this is what we have done. The people of Punjab and other parts of the country have done this and this is the way it should be handled. This is the appeal on our part and we shall take required action in this regard. We shall also consider the action that may be taken against those who have erred.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If you had cooperated, then it could have been done much earlier. Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please let us listen.

...(Interruptions)

12.17 hrs.

- (ii) **Re: Deletion of regional languages except Tamil in destination boards in train throughout the country**

[English]

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri): Hon. Speaker, Sir, we are witnessing frequent ethnic clashes in the country, that is, clashes between religions, on the issue of language, etc. These are always standing in the way of our unity and integrity. Sometimes, the action of the Government also accelerates these things happening in the country. Such a case has happened in the Railway Ministry recently.

The Railway Ministry vide its letter No. 87/MC/202/

10 Vol. II dated 22-11-2006 has communicated a Government decision for deletion of all the regional languages except (Interruptions)...

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not say this. This portion should not be there.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Sir, this letter mentions deletion of all the regional languages except Tamil. ....(Interruptions)

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY (Srīperumbudur): Sir, why is he mentioning about Tamil language, and about the Minister?...(Interruptions) Sir, this should not be allowed. ....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have omitted that portion.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Sir, I am only quoting from the letter. ....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Krishnaswamy, please take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI ARJUN SETHI (Bhadrak): Mr. Tripathy, you please read from the letter. ....(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Sir, I can place it on the Table of the House. I am reading from the letter. ....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Tripathy, are you reading from a Government notification?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Yes, Sir. I will authenticate this letter. ....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Otherwise, I would not allow it.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: This is a letter

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\*Not recorded.

[Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy]

from the Ministry of Railways to all the General Managers of Indian Railways. The subject given is: "Destination Boards in Trains—Languages to be used". The letter states that:

"Board have decided that all destination Boards of trains shall be written/painted/printed in Hindi and English languages only. ...*(Interruptions)* However, for trains based for primary maintenance in coaching depots located in Tamil Nadu State, the destination Boards may also be written in the regional language, that is, Tamil besides English and Hindi."...*(Interruptions)*

This is the instruction of the hon. Railway Ministry.  
...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (Ratnagiri): Sir, this is Indian Railways not the railway of States.  
...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: What is happening in the House? I am imploring the hon. Members to please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Ananth Kumar, please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You are given an opportunity to speak. If you disturb like this, I will adjourn the House. If any disturbance is there, I will immediately adjourn the House. You are not serious about any matter.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): We are serious, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: This does not show seriousness. Shri Ananth Kumar, are you a self-appointed advisor?

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is Indian Railway not the railway of any State.  
...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You please sit down.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing should be recorded

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Everybody is advising everybody.

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: We have an Official Language Policy. The Act has been passed in this Parliament. Its implementation is not at the mercy of any Government. The three-language policy is now the standing policy of the Government. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You have raised it already. I have allowed you to raise this very important issue.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: Let me complete my submission. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: All right, you have expressed your views.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is very strange. Is this the way the House will function?

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY: The Railway Board should withdraw this letter immediately. I have already written a letter one month back in this regard.

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\*Not recorded.

I have written a letter one month back to the hon. Minister Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav requesting that this letter should be withdrawn...(Interruptions). But it is unfortunate that he has not taken any action.

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned till 1 p.m.

12.21 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Thirteen of the Clock.*

13.00 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha re-assembled at Thirteen of the Clock.*

(MR. SPEAKER in the Chair)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ram Kripal Yadav, please go to your seat. Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: Please allow me to hear as to what you are saying.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: If you keep on standing here I will not listen to you.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): All right, I am going back to my seat.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I am not stopping you.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir,

three persons were again killed in Assam yesterday. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You listen to me.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Devendra Prasad, please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav, I have to go home. Please come here.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please, I have not called you, Shri Ram Kripal Yadav.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If I disallow, then you can raise it. I have not got any opportunity to say 'yes' or 'no'. Hon. Member, you are sincere.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: That is a very sensitive matter. Because of its importance, I allowed Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy. There is concern from all sections of the House. I believe, the Minister wishes to say something on this. Let us hear him first.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (Bangalore South): We have raised the issue. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have raised the issue and you have showed your opposition to what has been done.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let us hear the Minister.

...(Interruptions)



13.02 hrs.

# SUBMISSIONS BY MEMBERS

- (II) **Re: Deletion of regional languages except Tamil in destination boards in trains throughout the country—Contd.**

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): The matter was brought to the notice by Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy in the House in the 'Zero Hour'. We have heard it and the Government is very clear in this matter and that we have to respect all the languages as accepted by the Constitution of India. All the languages are regarded equally without any discrimination to any language. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (Ratnagiri): Then, withdraw the notification. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: In regard to the particular reference that the hon. Member has brought to the notice, I would say that we would actively address the issue at the appropriate level and there should not be any apprehension in future. ...*(Interruptions)* I said that I am not a Railway Minister. I will bring it to the attention of appropriate authority in the Railway Minister to initiate appropriate measures. What more can I say?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let me say something. Please allow me. Hon. Members, the Leader of the House is here.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Just a minute. Allow me to speak.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate. You cannot

force. I am trying to regulate the House. I am going to say which would help everybody.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, let me conclude this matter. I will come to your matter.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. SPEAKER: You have not been given permission to speak.

*[English]*

This is a very strange situation. Everybody wants to speak together.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, hon. Leader of the House is here; the hon. Railway Minister is here. I believe, the feelings of all sections of the House on this matter cannot be ignored.

There is already an established three language formula in this country and I am sure, the Government will consider it properly so that the Constitutional mandate is followed.

*[Translation]*

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Sir, I have not neglected the language of any of the States, neither had this order been issued during my tenure. The Department of Home had made this provision long-ago that the destination boards of local trains in Tamil Nadu would be delineated in the local language, that is, Tamil. Last year this dispute had emerged in Karnataka also since the train had entered the jurisdiction of the State. Railways does not take the decision in the matter of nomenclature. Since I do not wish to create dispute in the country, I would like to withdraw the said decision and reconsider the matter afresh after taking into confidence all the concerned parties.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I think the House will appreciate the gesture of the hon. Railway Minister because he himself had come and said that they respect all the languages. We should appreciate the gesture of the hon. Railway Minister.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, they will respect all languages including Telugu.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Thank you, Sir.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a serious matter. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Kindly give me two minutes.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Sir, the Ulfa terrorists are attacking people from Bihar residing in Assam. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If you defy me, I will not allow you to raise your subject; you can close the House if you like. But I want cooperation and I am entitled to expect cooperation from every hon. Member in this House. So, do not pressurize me and do not try to bulldoze me; I have been saying this for a long time.

I will call you after Dr. Sarma raises his subject.

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a matter of national interest. National unity is being threatened. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, my matter is also there.

MR. SPEAKER: Any hon. Member who raises his hand or says 'my matter' will not be called.

...(Interruptions)

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Lakhimpur): I would like to draw the attention of the Government regarding the situation in Assam due to the killing of an innocent boy, Shri Budheswar Moran, on 5th May by the Army in the name of false encounter. The situation in Assam which was becoming normal after the National Games were held there, is again turned to worst.

Shri Budeshewar Moran was an innocent boy who was lifted from the tea garden where he was working and the next morning, his body was handed over to the District Administration. People did not object to a normal counter-insurgency operation. They were highly agitated and they were taking protest *dharna* for five days, with about 10,000 people every day; and the National Highway was blocked.

The demand of the people was that the Chief Minister should come there and assure the people that no innocent people will be harassed and killed. But this is not a single, isolated incident.

Last year also, Shri Ajit Mohanta was killed by the Army. He was an innocent man. This time, the Army had confessed that the killing of the boy, Shri Budheswar Moran was an unfortunate incident because he was not an ULFA cadre.

The Chief Minister, instead of responding to the demand of the people, has evaded the situation and ultimately some third party has provoked the neighbouring tea garden workers consequently. There was a clash between the tea garden workers and the agitationists; and the police had resorted to firing and a few more youths were killed. The tea garden workers burnt alive some picketeers.

In this way, the situation has rather aggravated. The Assam Government has totally failed to maintain law and order.

MR. SPEAKER: State subject cannot be mentioned here.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: The most unfortunate thing is that the focus of that has been shifted to the Hindi-speaking people once again due to the mishandling of the situation by the Government and several Hindi speaking people.

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot refer to that matter here.

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: The present Congress Government in Assam has failed. So, the situation has become worst; violence and bomb blasts have started again, the situation has taken a communal turn.

Sir, I appeal through you, that the situation should be controlled by the Central Government intervention and the hon. Home Minister should lay a White Paper on this issue, and apprise the House of what is going on in Assam.

SHRI SARBANANDA SONOWAL (Dibrugarh): Sir, I associate with what he said.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, your name will be recorded.

Let the sensitive issues be discussed in a manner which behoves Parliament, the highest forum in this country. Let us discuss them in a serious manner.

13.10 hrs.

(III) **Re: Killing of six Hindi speaking people by ULFA in Assam**

[Translation]

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention and the attention of the House and that of the government towards an extremely important issue. Six Hindi speaking person in Sheosagar district and three Hindi speaking persons in Dibrugarh district in Assam were killed on 15th and 16th respectively. These people were labourers from Bihar. The House might be aware that 60 Hindi speaking persons were killed earlier also. Prior to that incident, some students from Bihar and other States who had gone to that State with appointment letters for joining

there, had been killed. Killings of poor labourers from Bihar has become a regular occurrence. Such barbaric killings by the Ulfa terrorists has created an atmosphere of terrorist the State and the Hindi speaking people are feeling insecure. I would like to know from the Home Minister whether any arrangements are being made for their safety and security or whether they have been left to fend for themselves? My contention is that the Union Government is not serious about dealing with the problem and this attitude is responsible for such a situation in the State. My leader and the Minister for Railways alongwith other party-leaders had visited the State a few days back. That had helped in stabilizing the situation. Labourers from Bihar and other States come to Assam to earn a living. These people have been living there not for one or two years but for the last 40-50 years. If the present situation persists, where would they go? The unity and integrity of the country is being threatened by the violence being perpetrated against these people. Therefore, the government would do well to ponder how long it would allow the poor people to be killed in this manner. Hence the government should intervene in the matter immediately. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Now you may sit down. *[English]* You have raised it in an appropriate manner.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: The Home Minister may kindly inform us as to what positive action he is taking in this regard? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. I have allowed you to speak and you have made your point.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: This is a serious matter. This will create an abnormal situation. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: This 'period' is not for debate; this is for raising the matter. I have allowed you to raise the

matter in the presence of the Government. What more can I do?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: This malaise may affect the other States too and it will be dangerous for the unity and integrity of the country. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down, you have raised the matter. Hon. Members Shri Vijoy Krishna, Shri Dharendra Agarwal, Shri Sitaram Singh, Shri Ganesh Prasad Singh, Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav, Shri Alok Mehta and Shri Ghuran Ram also associate themselves with the matter.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have said that this is a serious matter; the Government will look into it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Not one word will be recorded.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing? The hon. Minister wants to reply, but you are not allowing him. What is this? Absolute lawlessness is going on in the House.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): It is a serious issue that has been raised today here. At one point of time, our distinguished leader Shri Lalu Prasadji himself had been there to bring peace in that part of the country. Our Home Minister is in constant touch with the Chief Minister of Assam. It is a bad thing that has happened. We all disapprove of it. The Government will take a very firm stand to deal with the

terrorists as well as the people who are trying to divide the society. The workers who are there should be given full protection. I will not only bring it to the knowledge of the Home Minister, but I will also personally speak to the Prime Minister, the moment House rises for today. ...(Interruptions) I will personally take it up with the Prime Minister today. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you. I believe that there is an appropriate response to it.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL (Latur): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am obliged for being given this opportunity to speak. The condition of sugarcane farmers in certain States, particularly Maharashtra is fast deteriorating. Sugar Mills in the States controlled by the co-operative sector are reluctant to procure sugarcane from sugarcane farmers this year and as a consequence thereof the farmers are forced to see their sugarcane crops wilt in the fields. Due to this reason the farmers in many districts in the State, particularly Marathwada, are being forced to commit suicide.

The farmers have got lesser prices for their sugarcane crop in comparison to what they got last year. How will the farmers pay back their crops loans? How will they earn their livelihood if they do not get remunerative prices for their crops? The Union Government as well as the State government will have to answer this. The Union government should interfere in the matter of biased purchase of sugarcane by the sugar mills of the state at reduced prices due to a bumper crop of sugarcane and ensure that the sugarcane of all the sugarcane farmers are bought at good price. The Maharashtra government has announced that if the sugar mills do not buy the sugarcane then the sugarcane farmers will be given financial assistance of Rs. 10,000 per acre whereas a farmer spends more than Rs. 25,000 for producing sugarcane in one acre of land. Wherefrom will the farmer bring the balance sum of Rs. 15,000? I therefore, demand that the farmers may be provided financial

[Shrimati Rupatai D. Patil]

assistance of Rs. 50,000 per acre. The farmers of my parliamentary constituency Latur are in debt to the tune of about 125 crore rupees and hon. Minister of Agriculture can estimate the loan amount of all the sugarcane farmers of the State. At last I demand that the Union Government should write off the loans of sugarcane producing farmers. A large number of farmers are committing suicide. Recently the government has given a package to the farmers of Vidarbha who are committing suicide.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: That is why I have allowed you to raise this important matter.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RUPATAI D. PATIL: You give package after farmers commit suicide; it would be better if you announce the package earlier. I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. Thanks.

MR. SPEAKER: I give you opportunity to speak, still you get angry. [English] Shri Basu Deb Acharia to raise only the matter relating to AIIMS and not the other issue.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, why I am not allowed to raise the first matter?

MR. SPEAKER: It is because I am not allowing it. Enough State matters are being discussed.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, this issue was raised on the floor of the House as to how the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and OBC students are discriminated in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. Sir, all the students are kept in a separate hostel. Previously, six months back all the students, General as well as Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and OBC students, were accommodated in the same hostel. When anti-reservation started in the All India Institute of Medical Science itself, that institute became the centre of anti-reservation agitation. Since then these students were discriminated against.

Sir, the Government of India has appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Prof. Sukhdev Thorat, the University Grants Commission Chairman. Thorat Committee has submitted its Report. From the Report it is clear that these students are discriminated against.

Sir, there is a provision for giving training and special coaching to the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and OBC students but that guideline was not followed in the All India Institute of Medical Sciences. This Committee under the chairmanship of Prof. Thorat has made several recommendations. I demand that the recommendations of the Thorat Committee should be implemented immediately. The All India Institute of Medical Sciences, the Governing Body and the Director of the Institute should be asked to implement the recommendations of the Thorat Committee. The discrimination which is still continuing against the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and OBC students should be ended. The Thorat Committee has made clear who is responsible for this and how the Dean of this Institute was insulted by some people. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing? You have become legal adviser also.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, action should be taken against them and this discrimination should be ended immediately. The recommendations of the Thorat Committee should be implemented in letter and spirit. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: All Members are associating themselves with this matter.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Khan, for associating yourself with this matter, you do not have to take the time of the House. You send slips and all the names will be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Santasri Chatterjee and Shri A.V. Bellamin are associated themselves with the matter raised by Shri Basu Deb Acharia.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You are all setting up new procedures. Mr. Mahtab, you are an ideal Member. Please do not do that.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Sir, this is very important matter.

MR. SPEAKER: You may associate yourselves.

[English]

SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAN (Adoor): Sir, this is regarding illegal recruitment to Gulf countries which is rampant in Kerala even though there is prohibition of recruitment of women under the age of 30 years. There are so many agencies in the State to recruitment ladies under this age group to Gulf countries. Majority of the recruitments are to Saudi Arabia with the offer of work as housemaid but when they reach there, they are denied the offered job, salary, lodging, medical facilities, etc. In some cases, the women are forced into flesh trade. So, it is submitted that it is high time that the law is enforced prohibiting the recruitment of women under this age group to Gulf countries.

[Translation]

YOGI ADITYA NATH (Gorakhpur): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of this House, through you, towards the news-item appearing in the newspapers and on news channels with regard to patenting Yoga, the ancient legacy of India, by an American company.

Sir, if this matter is true then it is very serious and objectionable. Yoga is the ancient legacy of India. If any foreign agency or company tries to patent whatever our 'Rishis and Munis' have said about the Yoga, its different aspects and various Yoga methods in the 'Vedas and Upnishads', then it is a direct foreign invasion of India's intellectual property which we can call dacoity directly.

I would like to draw the attention of the government, through you, towards the fact that the American companies had committed similar mischief earlier also.

They have patented Turmeric, Neem, Blackberry and other ayurvedic medicines earlier also. Yoga is ancient method of India and a gift of Indian culture. If any such mischievous action is being taken by an American company or anybody else then it should be immediately checked. The Union government should make efforts to protect its intellectual property and legacy.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The names of the following Members may be associated with what has been said by Yogi Adityanath.

1. Shri Prahlad Joshi.
2. Shri B.K. Deo
3. Shri P. Patasani
4. Shri Avinash Rai Khanna
5. Shrimati Sushila Laxman Bangaru
6. Shri Chandramani Tripathi
7. Shri P. S. Gadhi

DR. C. KRISHNAN (Pollachi): Sir, thank you very much for this opportunity. I rise to make my submission on behalf of the MDMK party headed by Shri Vaiko.

Survey Reports and Exit Poll Reports are banned during the time of the elections. My request is that these reports should also be banned during times when there are no elections around without any prejudice. It is because these reports often lead to unwanted incidents and incite public sentiments. The reports which go against the people they turn violent and resort to involuntary attacks against the Press which release such reports.

MR. SPEAKER: Your matter is on banning of Exit Polls.

DR. C. KRISHNAN: Publication of such reports should be avoided. That is the point. In Tamil Nadu three people were killed in Madurai Dinakaran's Office. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You have referred the matter. I would not allow anything else.

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): Sir, this should not be allowed to go on record. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: If there is anything objectionable I will see. Please show me the proceedings.

Dr. Krishnan, please do not misuse the opportunity. You have given a notice for banning of Exit Polls. Now, you are going to Tamil Nadu.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Sambalpur): Sir, the nation is observing the 150th anniversary of the first war of Indian Independence and the nation is paying homage and tribute to the martyrs of the national heroes of that war. But I am sorry to say that one of the greatest heroes of that historic war, Veer Surrender Sahay has been totally forgotten. I would like to inform the House that even before 30 years of the first war of Indian Independence, he started his armed struggle against the Britishers just at the age of 19 years. In two phases he suffered the largest period of imprisonment in the whole history of struggle for Independence of mankind. He suffered imprisonment for 36 years. He died in the Asuragarh jail. He was blinded. He was poisoned by the Britishers. He was murdered inside the jail. Almost all the members of his family were either hanged, or were sent to *kalapani*. He started the guerrilla warfare and organized the tribal communities like the Brinjal community and the Gun community in the Western part of Orissa. He taught a terrific lesson to the Britishers. When the whole nation is engaged in paying a tribute to the heroes of the first war of India's Independence, Veer Surrender Sahay has been a forgotten name.

MR. SPEAKER: I think, very rightly you have raised this matter. I am sure the nation should remember him and remember his contributions to the nation.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: The Ministry of Culture is monitoring all this. I would like to request, through you, the Ministry of Culture to erect a memorial in his honour in any part of Orissa.

MR. SPEAKER: In this highest forum we are paying our respect to a great freedom fighter. I had the occasion to go there in your State.

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA: Sir, a statue of Veer Surendra Sahay may also be installed in the Parliament House. This is what we would like to appeal to you. The Chief Minister of Orissa has committed that the whole cost of the statue will be borne by the Government of Orissa.

MR. SPEAKER: We shall see about it. Whatever the Parliament can do, we will do.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (Cuttack): Sir, we would like to associate with him...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. SPEAKER: You send the slips. Your names will be recorded.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: All those who want to associate with his submissions will be associated. I myself have associated with him. Shrimati Archana Nayak is also associated on this matter.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE (Aurangabad, Maharashtra): Mr. Speaker, Sir, James Lane has written about Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharajji in his controversial book titled—'Shivaji', Hindu King in Islamic India'. I would like to draw the attention of the government, through you, towards the fact that this book describes the father, mother and relatives of Chhatrapati Maharajji and other saints in very bad taste. The Maharashtra government had banned this book but its distribution has been started again. I would like to say, through you, that the atmosphere at several places is getting vitiated after the sale of the book in the country including Maharashtra and agitations are being staged in Maharashtra. Several

organizations have started agitations in Maharashtra and many other places against restarting the sale of this book. This is a conspiracy to malign the image of Chhatrapati Maharajji. The Supreme Court has also ordered that any book containing objectionable matter about any 'Mahtma' or Yugpurush' should be banned. I would like to tell the government, through you, that such book should not be published because Chhatrapati Maharajji has been criticised in this book...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: It is a State matter.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: I would like to say, through you, that he is a 'Yugpurush' and his statue has been installed in this complex...(Interruptions) It should be banned.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE (Mumbai South Central): All of us have the same feelings. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is a very bad habit. You are speaking without giving any notice. I will not allow anything more on this matter.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Your feelings have been recorded.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, four labourers have been killed in Braj region. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: You can not raise a matter relating to the law and order situation of a state. I would not allow you to raise it.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Four labourers have been killed. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister for Railways wants to say something.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): Sir, I have an important matter to raise. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. I have not called you.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): Mr. Speaker, Sir, keeping in view the feelings of this House and your directions and on the question of language, I propose to withdraw it immediately and this statement is withdrawal is under the Act of Parliament. Parliament has enacted a law. Therefore, we support trilingual formula in Tamil Nadu. Do not take it otherwise and make it controversial. The Act provides for trilingual formula and showing respect for the languages of each state. I would not like to withdraw it. Let us have an all party meeting and we can take it up in the next session.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This should be rectified. He has reiterated his support for the three-language formula.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV: Four labourers have been killed due to dynamite explosion. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No ground has been stated. I would not allow it. It is over now. Matters under Rule 377 will be treated as laid on the Table of the House.

...(Interruptions)



13.31 hrs.

**MATTERS UNDER RULE 377\***

- (i) **Need to incorporate necessary changes in railway catering policy to protect the interest of small vendors**

*[Translation]*

SHRI CHANDRA MANI TRIPATHI (Rewa): Sir, the people of all sections were earning their livelihood by getting licence of Stalls, trolley on payment of general licence fees to the Railways on different railway platforms in the country till 2004. This policy was formulated keeping in view the interests of small vendors operating small stalls on the railway platforms.

After that a new catering policy was formulated in the year 2004 but it was not implemented because it was not in the interest of small licence holders. The policy implemented in the year 2005 ignores the interests of small licencees. A higher licence fee is being levied on small vendors from time to time, whereas hon. Minister for Railways had assured that small catering stalls, vendors being run by people belonging to reserved category would not be disturbed. Small vendors have to face much financial burden on account of higher licence fee and as a result thereof they are migrating and having a lot of difficulties in bringing up their families.

The new catering policy has been formulated keeping in view the commercial interests and to bolster the income of Indian Railways and it has no place for small and poor contractors. This is why the small vendors do not get the tenders for small stalls and vendors on the platforms as the licence fee is also very high and the multinational companies are gradually occupying all these places and now eighty per cent of the railway passengers who used to get idli, bada, etc. at cheaper rates earlier, are paying Rs. 60 to 80 for breakfast only which is injustice to small contractors as well as the poor people of this country.

I, therefore, demand from hon. Minister of Railways

that the small licencees like trolley, stalls operators and vendors be permitted again to do business at railway stations in A, B, C category. Twelve per cent of annual sale be taken as licence fees. Small stall operators should be permitted to sell fast food items. It will increase not only the annual income but also the income of railways. I do believe that the hon. Minister of Railways would issue necessary directions keeping in view the interests of small licencees.

- (ii) **Need to check eviction of tribals from their natural dwellings in Madhya Pradesh**

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur): Sir, Sanctuaries have been established in several states in the country where there are dense forests. These sanctuaries in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh are spread over large and wide area but it has been seen that large parts of these sanctuaries have no trees due to inadequate care and current problems or cutting of trees in large area. Primarily the tribals and other villagers have been living in these forests cum sanctuaries for years together and they earn their livelihood from agriculture and animal husbandry and they have never damaged the forests in any way. But efforts are being made for the last few years to evict them from there and the logic of the officers behind this more is that they are encroaching on the forest land which is baseless as all such tribals and other people have been living there and earning livelihood for many generations. Recently the work of separation of revenue land and forest land by delineation has commenced in Madhya Pradesh. Consequently it has caused a crisis of livelihood and living for those thousands of tribal families. They are very much worried.

I, therefore, request the hon. Minister for Environment and Forests to take this matter seriously and with humane approach so that the forests may be preserved and the tribals may not have to face the crisis because all these people in Madhya Pradesh have treated the forests as their god and safeguarded the forests. So they should not be evicted from their natural

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\*Treated as laid on the table.

dwellings on account of delineation of forest and revenue land.

**(iii) Need to rehabilitate Indian doctors who were forced to leave United Kingdom**

[English]

SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA (Hoshiarpur): I would like to draw the attention of the House and the Government to the miserable conditions of the Indian doctors who are stranded in UK. While we all know that there is a acute shortage of qualified doctors in India and we are not able to produce not even a fraction of as many doctors as the country needs. Resultantly, people are forced to get treatment from quacks and others who further aggravate the diseases leave alone curing them. These Indian doctors who went to UK with the intention of studying courses like MRCP, RFCS, are made to face difficult situation today and are facing unemployment, humiliation and starvation as well. Arrangements should be made to make use of them and bail them out of this difficult situation. Government should make efforts to rehabilitate them in India and arrangements/provisions be made for recognizing their degrees in order that they settle down in India and contribute for the progress of the nation.

**(iv) Need to conduct an inquiry into alleged irregularities in the Pradhanmantri Gram Sadak Yojana and Bharat Nirman Yojana in Bundelkhand region of Uttar Pradesh**

[Translation]

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH VERMA (Jalaun): Sir, the length and height of damaged roads being selected for upgradation all over Uttar Pradesh particularly in Bundelkhand region's Jalaun, Hamirpur, Jhansi, Lalitpur, Mahoba and Banda districts under the Pradhan Mantri Sadak Yojana and Bharat Nirman Yojana have been determined arbitrarily and DCIs upto the carpet level have been got sanctioned arbitrarily showing PCIs at lower levels. During the past years various departments have got sanctions for remetalling sections of roads which were already metalled. Also

various departments have submitted proposals for recarpeting of roads with State Government funds thus preparing grounds for wastage of crores of rupees.

Hence, the upgradation priority list prepared by the work awarding agency may be examined and action taken against the guilty officials so that crores of rupees of funds provided by the Union Government may be saved.

**(v) Need to expedite completion of pending projects on NH 24 for the benefit of people in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh**

SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR (Bareilly): Sir, the following workss being implemented by the Ministry of Road Transport on NH 24 have been pending for many years. The projects are under process but work has not been started as yet.

1. Land has been acquired for construction of by-pass in Bareilly on N.H. 24. Work on the proposal has been pending for the last five years.
2. Four laning of NH 24 from Moradabad to Bareilly on priority basis.
3. Construction of overbridge on NH 24 running through Western Mirganj and Fatehganj may be sanctioned.

**(vi) Need to run a direct train from Bolangir (Orissa) to Allahabad and extend Howrah-Sambalpur-Howrah Ipat Express upto Titlagarh**

[English]

SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Sambalpur): Thousands of people from western part of Orissa, namely Sambaipur, Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Barpali, Bolangir etc. use to travel to Allahabad to perform rituals and shradhh karma of the dead ones of their families. As there is no direct train to Allahabad from these places, the commuters face lot of inconvenience to reach Allahabad. Particularly, the senior citizens and ladies

[Shri Prasanna Acharya]

are the most sufferers as the commuters to Allahabad are required to break journey due to non-availability of direct train service. A direct train service to Allahabad either from Sambaipur or from Bolangir will not only facilitate train travellers smooth journey to Allahabad and other places en-route, it would also fetch considerable revenue to the Railways. I would, therefore, urge upon the Railway Minister to sanction a train from Bolangir to Allahabad with immediate effect for the greater benefit of the people of the region.

The 2871 UP/2872 DN Howrah-Sambalpur-Howrah Ispat Express runs between Howrah and Sambaipur, the travel period being 10 hrs only, these trains have enough time to halt at Howrah and Sambaipur railway stations. If this can be extended up to Titlagarh from Sambaipur covering 180 kms extra route, a large number of commuters of Western Orissa will benefit and they will get a direct link to Howrah. I would request the Railway Minister to consider both the above proposals and implement them at the earliest.

- (vii) **Need to make available Rs. 5 coin released recently in recognition to the contribution of Sree Narayana Guru and installed its statue at a prominent place in the Capital**

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): The Government of India has in recognition to the contributions of the great Jagat Guru Sree Narayana Gurudev released a coin of five rupees value. But in a nation of more than a billion the number of such coins minted and circulated is only meagre. Coins are now not available for circulation as the available ones are safely kept with individuals who view the Guru with high reverence. The Government should mint and make available at least one crore coins for circulation. The great message of the Guru like 'one caste, one religion and one God for human being' is highly relevant in recent times. It is also necessary to install a statue of Sree Narayana Guru in a prominent place in the Capital. I request the Government to take immediate steps in this regard.

13.33 hrs.

**TYRE CORPORATION OF INDIA LIMITED  
(DISINVESTMENT OF OWNERSHIP)  
BILL, 2007\***

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for disinvestment of Government's equity in the Tyre Corporation of India Limited and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

MR. SPEAKER: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for disinvestment of Government's equity in the Tyre Corporation of India Limited and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

*The motion was adopted.*

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: I introduce the Bill.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): I oppose the introduction of the Bill. ....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have no right to do that without mentioning the ground. You have not mentioned any ground. I will not allow you. You can do whatever you want to do.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : I have a right to oppose the introduction of the Bill. ....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfortunate. I can only say that it is unfortunate. Shri Radhakrishnan, you are aware of the rules, but you are not aware of the contents of the rules.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I can deny that on the ground that I am the Speaker of this House. I happen to be the Presiding Officer.

...(Interruptions)

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\*Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section-2 dated 17-5-2007.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Radhakrishnan, please take your seat. Please keep quiet first. Listen to me. According to the rule, "The notice to pass the introduction of the Bill shall be addressed to the Secretary-General specifying clearly and precisely the objections to be raised."

What are the precise objections have you mentioned in your notice?

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : I will tell you.  
....(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Telling won't do.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not record it.

(Interruptions)\*...

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: During Zero Hour unlimited number of matters cannot be allowed. Parties have agreed that only five matters should be allowed. Some discipline should be there in the House. By raising your voice, you cannot hold the House to ransom.

...(Interruptions)

13.38 hrs.

# MIZORAM UNIVERSITY(AMENDMENT) BILL, 2007

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY  
OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI  
D. PURANDESWARI): Sir on behalf of Shri Arjun Singh,  
I beg to move:

"That the Bill to amend the Mizoram University Act, 2000, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

MR. SPEAKER: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to amend the Mizoram University Act, 2000, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

SHRI TAPIR GAO (Arunachal East): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Mizoram University (Amendment) Bill, 2007. On behalf of the people of the North-East, I would like to thank and congratulate the hon. Ministers who have taken pain to bring this Bill for amendment.

13.38 hrs.

[SHRI MOHAN SINGH *in the Chair*]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Mizoram University Act was passed in 2000 and the University was established on 2nd July, 2000 itself. People of Mizoram are in need of a University with good infrastructure. Not just Mizoram, the entire North-East is in need of such universities. The UPA Government has created Central Universities in many North-Eastern States. We need good infrastructure for better education to our children.

In this Mizoram University, 26 colleges have been affiliated and 7,000 students are studying there. Under Post-Graduation, 1,840 students are there. But out of 39 Departments in the University, only 27 Departments are in existence.

Therefore, I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister and the Government to establish all the 39 requisite UGC departments in the Mizoram University. Here, I would like to inform the hon. Minister and the House that in the Tenth Plan, only Rs. 76,000 crore has been allotted to the Mizoram University. It is insufficient for the establishment of a good university in Mizoram and in the North-Eastern States. Therefore, the Government of Mizoram has given proposals during the Eleventh Five Year Plan for the establishment of infrastructure development in the University. Therefore, it is my humble submission on behalf of the people of Mizoram that in the Eleventh Plan all the requisite proposals submitted by the Mizoram Government should be fully allotted to Mizoram for the establishment of all the requisite 39 departments in the Mizoram University.

Sir, fortunately, the UGC has given to the Mizoram

[Shri Tapir Gao]

University the School of Management and the School of Technology and Engineering. It needs more facilities. I think the hon. Minister is very conscious about this University. It is not only the Mizoram University but also all the newly created Universities should be given a lot of emphasis for the better education in the North-Eastern Region.

Sir, we need more funds for the infrastructure development in the North-Eastern Regions. The students who belong to the North-Eastern Regions are facing a lot of problems for getting admissions in the Metropolitan cities like Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata. Therefore, more departments, especially IIT like departments should also be established in Mizoram University. I hope that the Government of Mizoram has given all the requisite proposals for the Mizoram University.

Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to take care of this University. Sir, with this amendment, my brothers and sisters of Mizoram will really benefit and the establishment will get a lot of facilities. Therefore, I rise here to support the Mizoram University (Amendment) Bill.

DR. THOKCHOM MEINYA (Inner Manipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. I rise to support the Mizoram University (Amendment) Bill, 2007. This Bill was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 15th of May, 2007. I join my hon. friend, Shri Tapir Gao, while congratulating the hon. Minister of Human Resource Development for bringing out this amendment.

Sir, let me just tell you very frankly that this Mizoram University Bill was one of the first such Bills of a Central University in that part of the State. In the beginning, this Bill has all the requisite articles of a Central University where the Governor of a State do not have much role to play. But when the other Central Universities are coming up, say for example, when we wanted to convert the University of Allahabad as Central University and also the Manipur University into Central University, then we have discussed about the role of the Governor in the university system. In that regard,

the Mizoram University's original Bill did not have the Governor's role at all. Normally, the Central University does not have the role of the Governor. We have the Visitor, then after that we have the Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and like that the whole system was working. But we wanted to put the Governor's role because many of Central Universities do not have the State-wise region. In the North-Eastern India, we have started introducing Central University or many of the universities are now converted into status of a Central University. In that case, what we want to do was, we want to put the responsibility.

Rather, we want to put the Governor in the system. So, the post or Office of the Chief Rector was introduced. The Governor should come in the hierarchy after the Visitor. Perhaps, this omission was to be rectified. Now, the HRD Ministry has come out with this amendment. It is right time that the Central Universities which are based in the respective States of the country should have the Governor in the system who should have some role in the system. So, I welcome this amendment. This is a good piece of legislation for making a similarity, rather regular involvement of the Governor, in the administration of the University.

While discussing about the amendment and supporting it, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of HRD to one aspect. In some of these Central Universities, the administration, of course, is vested in the Vice-Chancellor. But as the Visitor is His Excellency the President of India, sometimes, communication gap is there. I am not blaming the system. It always happens. Even though the system of information technology is developing so fast these days, there are certain things which we have to look into. I am not going away from the scope of this Bill.

For example, the Manipur University became a Central University some one year back. You know the skeleton staff is there. For the posts of Registrar and the finance officer, interviews had been conducted long back but the results are still awaited. This thing should not happen because the administration there suffers very much. So, I would very earnestly request that all the Central Universities in the North-East should improve.

Now, almost every State in the North-East is having a Central University. The Mizoram University is the first of this kind. This omission of the Governor's role in the system is now being rectified. We congratulate the Ministry and the hon. Minister in this regard. While congratulating, I wish that the administration should be improved so that the purpose for which the State Universities are made into Central Universities is very well served. This is one thing which I would request.

At the same time, the standard of higher education in those areas is important. I think we have to draw the attention towards that aspect. When I say this, the hon. Union Minister would definitely tell me that education belongs to the Concurrent List. Even then, if it becomes a Central University, he has to take appropriate action. There are colleges in that part of the country where the number of teachers is more than the number of students. It is so in the Government colleges also. So, the system has become very bad. I think the Central Government while running the Central Universities will also look into this because these are colleges which are affiliated colleges to the University. So, when the number of teachers is more than the number of students, you have to see that this thing should not happen in the interest of the development of higher education.

With these few words, I once again congratulate the Ministry and the hon. Minister and support the amending Bill.

**SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil):** Sir, I rise to support the Bill. It is a very simple Bill conferring the status to the Rector in a particular wing in the Mizoram University.

In this connection, I have to make some observations regarding our legislative business in connection with this also. There were troubles in the House, disorder of the type which we witnessed. Ours is a law-making body. So, law should be made after due discussion. There was no discussion in this House at least in this week itself. Three or four Bills were passed without any kind of a discussion. It was a very unfortunate situation that was created in the House. The Government should make one thing clear. I would tell this. Do not make

use of the situation in getting a Bill passed without due discussion. There may be troubles in the House. It is quite natural. But the Government has a responsibility. It is their responsibility to see that a Bill is passed after proper discussion. But proper discussion did not take place in the House for the last three or four days. Important Bills were passed. I had given notice. I did not get an opportunity of taking part in the discussion.

This is a very unfortunate situation. I advise the UPA Government to be very careful on this matter. The Government should take care to see that this law making body makes laws after proper discussion in the House. For example, take the case of Tyre Corporation of India Bill. The Tyre Corporation of India was formed by an Act of Parliament. The Government should have taken care to include this in the Revised List of Business that was circulated to Members in the morning, but they did not do that. If it had been included in the Revised List of Business for today, I could have given due notice raising certain objections quoting constitutional provisions. What is the policy of the UPA Government? Are they supporting privatisation of public sector undertakings? If they are not, then it is against their own policy. I agree that there may be situations and there may be occasions for the Government to take a liberal decision. But that must be taken after due consultation. The Government should have given us an opportunity to express our views by including this Bill in the Revised List of Business, but that was not done. After the adjournment of the House, during the interval we got a Supplementary List of Business including this Bill as Item No. 23B. This is not proper.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Mr. Radhakrishnan, the subject matter before the House is Mizoram University (Amendment) Bill. You speak on that.

**SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN:** I am talking about the conduct of the Government in relation to legislative business before the House. What they are doing is not correct. I have an experience of more than 30 years as a legislator. I have been the Speaker of Kerala Legislative Assembly and I have been a Member of this House for three terms. But never in my life have I come across such a situation where the Government

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan]

is including a Bill for introduction in the House through a Supplementary List of Business during the course of the day.

Coming to the Mizoram University (Amendment) Bill, I take this opportunity to highlight some issues that have come up for public discussion. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister who is piloting this Bill regarding the direction given by the Supreme Court yesterday about ragging in higher educational institutions. The Supreme Court has said that ragging is a criminal offence. The business of ragging is prevalent in all professional colleges as well as in other higher educational institutions. This is not only a criminal offence, but it is also against our culture. As ragging has become a normal practice in almost all higher educational institutions, the Supreme Court found it proper to give a direction that the concerned educational institution will be liable to take action if ragging takes place there.

Sir, we know that education, as a whole, is a Concurrent Subject. The Central Government is also having the legal authority to make laws. So, the Central Government should bring a legislation stating that all State Governments should bring legislations which contain a provision that ragging should be prevented in all educational institutions. So, a Central legislation is the need of the hour as per the direction of the Supreme Court.

There is another problem with regard to reservation for OBCs in higher educational institutions. The Supreme Court has taken a different view on this. But our view is entirely different from that of the Supreme Court. We want that the Other Backward Classes, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes should be given their due share of representation in all higher educational institutions.

For that also, the Government should take a very firm stand against the stand taken by our Apex court and whenever we take into consideration the Mizoram University Bill, this matter must also be borne in mind by the concerned Ministry and they must take a very

firm stand in protecting the rights of OBC and SC/ST students in higher education. For that purpose, if a legislation is required, the Government should also come forward with a legislation if that need be there.

With these observations, I support this Bill.

[Translation]

SHRI GANESH PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I stand to speak on Mizoram University Bill, 2007. Evidently it is a very short Bill. Only one line needs to be added to section 9 of Mizoram University Act that the Governor of Mizoram shall be the Chancellor of the University. This is not problematic. You must have seen that the Universities in States also have the Governors of the State as their Chancellor or Registrar.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Mizoram University was founded in the year 2000. Later on, in 2001, H/E the President was invested as a visitor in the University. Mizoram is an extremely backward state. The University is being run with the objective of promoting development in the State and encouraging higher education. Earlier infrastructure was lacking and there was no building for the University. Now the University has its own building. There are many degree colleges under the University. Infrastructure was needed. Hence, I support the Bill.

[English]

SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY (Basilhat): Thank you Mr. Chairman Sir. I am happy that we have the scope to discuss this Bill before passing this Bill. I rise to support the Mizoram University (Amendment) Bill, though we have a limited scope to discuss this subject because the Bill is very small.

Sir, there are no divergent opinions on passing the Bill. But my submission is that the Mizoram is one of the seven sisters of our country and Mizoram is a financially weaker and backward State. Every time, we speak on this and the Prime Ministers from different political parties and fronts have stated that the Government is very much keen to bring the seven sisters, the North-Eastern States, of our country into the mainstream.

Sir, Mizoram State itself is a financially weaker State, the infrastructure facility is very much low. The Mizoram State Government has established this university for the proper and higher education of the students of that particular State. But as being the poor State, the infrastructure facility is very much low.

Sir, education is in the Concurrent List. But the State also has the responsibility to give education to the people as well as the Government of India has tremendous responsibility for rendering assistance to the State Government for the upliftment of the education among the people of that particular State, particularly, the students.

Here, the Governor has given some powers so far as the University is concerned. Barring a few universities, like Vishwa Bharati Vishwavidyalaya, so far as I know, in most of the universities, Governor is the Chancellor of that university. So, the Governor should be the Chancellor of the university. There is no divergence of opinion on that.

14.00 hrs.

I would humbly submit before the hon. Minister and also before this august House that as Mizoram is financially weaker and backward State—that is the hilly area—the Government of India should come forward to render all possible financial assistance and other sorts of assistance for the development of the educational system of Mizoram. It should assist them financially; it should assist them for providing infrastructural facility so that they can offer different subjects to the students, to read different subjects in the University like other big age-old Universities.

I hope the Government will look into the matter and take appropriate steps and action to improve the educational facility, to improve the infrastructure there so that the students of Mizoram and other North-Eastern States will be able to get higher education as per other developed States of the country.

With these words I conclude and I support the Amendment Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Francis Fanthome—not present.

Shri Mani Charenamei.

SHRI MANI CHARENAMEI (Outer Manipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Mizoram University (Amendment) Bill, 2007. Mizoram is a small State in terms of size. In terms of economy, it is backward. But, in terms of education and literacy it is second only to Kerala. Amongst the North-Eastern States, it is a purely tribal State and it has advanced much ahead than the other States in this country. It has produced brilliant students and efficient people all over the country and many of them are now in the All India Services, and they are providing good service to the nation.

This University should not only have the minimum infrastructure but then this University or this State—particularly the Mizoram University—should have that kind of infrastructure which the country is providing to the best Universities in the country because they have got enough educated people and they can man the University efficiently. But the problem here in the North-Eastern Region is that we are finding difficulty in getting good Professors, good teachers in the North East. Being a Central University, the appointment of teachers is also done according to the Central norms. But sometimes we find it difficult because the ST quota is only 7.5 per cent. Sometimes the people from the State alone cannot get into the service because the quota is very limited. We find that people are not willing to come to teach in these remote areas. The shortage of teachers is the biggest problem in the North-Eastern Region. I would like to cite a few examples which are there in Manipur University. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that last year, in Manipur University, there was recruitment of 70 teachers, namely, 23 Professors, 26 Readers and 21 Lecturers. In the first category of Professor and Reader, there was no SC/ST reservation. Only in the case of Lecturers—21 Lecturers—there was reservation for SCs/STs and OBCs. This kind of discrimination is going on in the North-Eastern Region.

That is why, we need that the Governor of the State or the neutral authority to be involved and his



[Shri Mani Charenamei]

involvement should be brought in so that he can do justice. In a State like Manipur, where many communities stay together and where tribal population constitutes 33 per cent of the State, the role of a neutral authority is very important to do justice to all the people, in the interest of the University as well as in the interest of the students.

Sir, with these words, I support this Mizoram University (Amendment) Bill.

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY (Nalgonda): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have a confusion regarding this Bill. As far as I understand, in the whole of the country, the Governors, who are the constitutional heads, will be the Chancellors of the University, whereas here, it is proposed that the Governor of the State of Mizoram shall be the Chief Rector of the University. If it is the same, I do not know why it is not being named as the Chancellor. Why is it the Chief Rector? In most of the Universities, the Rectors will be the University Professors. I do not know what the Chief Rector is. While the hon. Minister was introducing the Bill, nothing could be heard because of the disturbance in the House. I do not know whether there is any explanation about this.

Of course, I do not oppose it because I do not understand the reason behind this amendment making the Governor as the Chief Rector of the University. I would like to hear her explanation.

I would like to present a few points on this occasion.

India, being a great and big country, we need more and more Universities and particularly in the backward areas, University will help to expand specialization of education in those areas. In the North East area also, if the Government is in a position to have new Universities, they should give more new Universities.

While the Government is spending more amount on education, there is a feeling that higher education is being abandoned from the responsibility of the

Government of India. It is true that we have to spend more money for elementary education and secondary education but at the same time, in a country with 300 million people living below the poverty line we need to spend a good amount of money on higher education also. We cannot leave it to the private people only. The so-called private Universities and the foreign Universities are not going to meet the needs of our education. They will come here not on the philanthropic and educational reasons but they come here for commercialization. Hence, the Government of India should not abandon its responsibility of expanding higher education, spending more amount and giving more Universities. Compared to many other countries, the number of Universities in our country is much less. It is necessary that more amount should be spent on it and more new Universities should be brought in. At the same time, we should take all care to see that the standards of education in the Universities should be kept up so that the students who come out of these Universities will be accepted as a specialist.

Sir, on this occasion, I would like to make an appeal to the hon. Minister. In my constituency, Nalgonda, Andhra Pradesh, there is a very popular Institute, Swami Ramanand Tirtha Rural Institute. The hon. Minister must be knowing about that Institute because she comes from Andhra Pradesh. It was expected to start as a rural University but as no degree courses and post graduate courses are allowed, it is still an Institute only. It has got all the pre-requisites that are necessary and all qualifications for becoming a University.

I would request the Union Government to allot special funds to start degree courses and post-graduate courses, and declare it as a full fledged University.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. At the outset, I would like to thank all my colleagues for having participated in this deliberation today and having extended their support to the Bill that is under discussion today.

As rightly pointed out by some of my colleagues here, the participation of the Governor in many Central Universities in such States where the Central Universities have been established, has been continuing. But in the State of Mizoram, as it was not there, it was intended to ensure that the Governor has a very important role to play. I would also like to briefly outline the few reasons why the role of the Governor was sought to be included in the functioning of the Mizoram University.

Though the Chief Rector does not have a direct role to play in the functioning of the Central University excepting nominating certain Members to the Court of the University, he plays a very important and vital role in extending his advice to the University specially in such situations where his advice, as a very experienced person, is sought. In such matters of crucial importance where issues are very sensitive, his advice is very important, and that is exactly why the role of the Governor is very important in the functioning of a Central University.

Further, Sir, the Departmentally-Related Standing Committee on Human Resource Development also, in its Report on the Manipur University Bill, 2005, observed that the Governor should have a very important role to play in the Central Universities, which are located specially in the border areas; and the Governor being an important link between the Union Government and the State Governments, it was thought essential that his role be made vital and mandatory in these Universities.

It is, therefore, proposed that the Governor of Mizoram also as the Chief Rector of Mizoram should be playing a very important role, and that is the reason why the Mizoram University (Amendment) Bill has been brought forward to this august House today.

Let me answer some of the apprehensions that the hon. Members have expressed here. Shri Tapir Gao was very apprehensive about the support given to the North-Eastern Region. Here, I would like to say that presently, there are 21 Central Universities functioning in various parts of the country, of which

seven are located in the North-Eastern Region itself. Besides this, the Parliament has also passed three more Acts for conversion into Central Universities, out of which even the Tripura State University is one. Further, he also raised the issue about the Departments. Here, I would like to say that at present, there are 20 Postgraduate and 19 Undergraduate Departments. However, establishing all these faculties is a decision that the University Authorities would have to take. The UGC/Central Government cannot take a decision without the initiative of the University. However, the Faculty of the Technology and the Faculty of the Management are being started with additional support given to them.

Coming to the apprehensions raised by Dr. Thokchom Meinya about the delay in the appointment of the First Registrar and the First Finance Officer of the Manipur University, the reason is that the University forwarded only one name each to the Visitor. Therefore, the revised proposal has, now, been forwarded after it was sought for. Now, the decision would be taken by the Visitor.

Coming to the apprehensions of Shri Mani Charenameri, during the 10th Plan, the Mizoram University has been allocated Rs. 76 crore under plan for development; and another Rs. 37.52 crore under non-plan for maintenance.

During the Eleventh Plan, however, the University is free now to submit proposals to the UGC and to the Union Government also for increased allocation and this would duly be considered. Many of the Members have raised the issue of starting Central Universities in their States. But, however, the present policy of the Government has been to consolidate and expand the facilities in the already existing Central Universities rather than very sparsely and thinly spreading the resources and not being able to support the university very well in its full capacity. Therefore, the possibilities of setting up new Central Universities in other disadvantaged regions, however, could be explored during the Eleventh Plan period. However, at the recent State Education Ministers' Conference, it was resolved that during the Eleventh Plan period, one State University in such

[Shrimati D. Purandeswari]

States where the Central Universities do not exist, would be funded to the level of a Central University.

I think with these, I have answered all the apprehensions that have been raised by my colleagues, and I seek the support in passing this Bill.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the procedure for passing the Bill may be started.

[English]

The question is:

"That the Bill to amend the Mizoram University Act, 2000, as passed by Rajya Sabha be taken into consideration."

*The motion was adopted.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"That clause 2 stand part of the Bill."

*The motion was adopted.*

*Clause 2 was added to the Bill.*

*Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill.*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister may now move that the Bill be passed.

SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

*The motion was adopted.*

14.18 hrs.

## DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

### (I) Global Warming—Contd.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the House will take up Item No. 26—Discussion under Rule 193 on Global Warming.

Now, the hon. Minister is to reply.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, yesterday when we were agitating, the Minister, Mr. Kapil Sibal passed some sarcastic comments against the Party like BJP. He said: "BJP is a party of carbon dioxide. It is a Party of carbon monoxide. ....(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): I think strictly once we go by the rules, that is not part of the record.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Let me say that I can also use very strong words but I will never do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think it is not part of the record.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: It is not part of the record. Unnecessarily, you are spoiling your Party by bringing it on record. It was not part of the record.

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA): It is nothing but a running commentary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It was not recorded. Please take your seat.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: It was not recorded. You are bringing it on record. ....(Interruptions)

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: But they are not such foul-mouthed. That is the only comment that I have to make.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, it was not recorded. Please take your seat.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Yesterday, somebody said that some Member was... \*. But the Speaker said from the podium that this sort of word should not be used. But do you expect that one party will use such types of words against the other party?...*(Interruptions)* I very strongly protest it. I never use words like that. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: That was not recorded and your version will also not be recorded.

SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPAN (Trichur): Sir, I would like to make a submission. With his reply, I think the discussion is over. Is not it? But I think there was a promise made that Mr. Kapil Sibal will intervene.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has concluded his speech.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: I think Mr. Chandrappan should know that the discussion is concluded. That was decided in the meeting this morning. Now, it is the Minister to reply.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, the Minister is to reply.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Within two minutes his speech was over.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: It is better that he speaks for at least ten minutes. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing is going on record. Why are you shouting.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF EARTH SCIENCES (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): Sir, he is the Minister concerned. There is no need for me to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: He does not want to speak .

...*(Interruptions)*

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\*Not recorded.

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, I must thank the hon. Members who participated in the debate. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has already spoken.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing is being recorded.

*(Interruptions)* \*...

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: It is because it seems I prevented him to speak. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Kindly allow us to conduct the House properly. It was decided in the morning meeting with all the Leaders. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: I feel guilty because it seems I prevented him. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Do not feel guilty. You may not feel guilty and he may never feel shy. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. RAJA: Do not feel guilty. His time will come. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: He will continue to attack your philosophy whenever he gets the chance. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: I am not disturbing. I am asking to speak for ten minutes. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your intervention is not being recorded. Why are you speaking?

...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

SHRI A. RAJA: Sir, I must thank the hon. Members who have participated in the important debate which is

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\*Not recorded.

[Shri A. Raja]

a burning subject throughout the country. During the discussions the significance attached to the global warming or climate change has been exposed by the hon. Members. Before starting my reply to the discussion, I must salute Mrs. Indira Gandhi who took the initiative for bringing the very important piece of legislation in the name of Environmental Protection Act, 1986. Before 1986 no such legislative measure was taken. Of course, after 1986 we were concerned about the global warming and climate change. Not only that, in the year 1980 the then Prime Minister Mrs. Gandhi brought another piece of legislation in the name of Forest Conservation Act, 1980. Before that, of course, the Indian Forest Act, 1927 was there. But it was only a prohibitory clause and no regulatory clause was available in those days. Only after the 1980s, during the period of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, all these measures have started. Now we are starting at a very peak point to discuss this subject.

On global warming, with all my due respect to the hon. Members, some of the hon. Members exposed to this House that global warming can be controlled within territorial limits. With such a specification in the mind, with all my sincerity to the hon. Members in this House, I must say that such a territorial limit cannot be attached to the climate change. As a whole the climate change must be looked after by all countries in the universe, globally.

Whenever we are talking about the global warming and climate change, the two important measures that have been taken by the United Nations and the other countries must be taken into account. Some of the hon. Members, more specifically my predecessor Shri Suresh Prabhu who is unfortunately not here, spoke on the subject with valuable points. He said that only after 1750 the human induced climatic change came into existence because of developmental activities.

The mover of the discussion, hon. Member Shri Chandrapan gave a very valid point that the glaciers are being melted and one more institute can be put up in this country to have a study exclusively for this

purpose. Of course, Mrs. Maneka Gandhi wanted to have a Committee which would be consisting intra-ministerial members. I think that all the hon. Members are aware that when the Budget was presented to this House by the hon. Minister of Finance, in the Budget speech itself it has been categorically stated that there will be an expert Committee on climate change consisting of all Ministries, those who are having a share in the climate change namely, environment, science and technology and other Ministries.

According to the promise made in this House, a Committee has been formed and the notification has been issued under the chairmanship of Dr. Chidambaram. That has been issued.

Before replying the hon. Members' queries and apprehensions which were expressed in this House, I must say that we are being guided by two very important instruments—United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is nothing but a system through which all the countries were permitted to assess, to quantify their emissions in 1994. Before that, no country was asked to quantify its emissions. Emissions were there, but no country was asked to give report to the United Nations about its emissions. In 1994, under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, it was done. The quantification assessment was done in each and every country, which was communicated to the United Nations, and it was put on the public domain so that people may know which are the countries polluting this globe. Whenever we are talking about climate change or global warming, the very catchy words, important words being often used are 'sustainable development'. India is one country which is having its own unique perception in its mind as to how to use the sustainable development. Whenever we are planning, the planning must be towards accelerated economic growth, but the accelerated economic growth and planning must be coupled with the principle of sustainable development. That is the stand taken by India in international forums.

According to United Nations Framework

Convention on Climate Change, India has assessed its own emissions. Some of the Members had apprehension in their minds that climate change is going to affect India more or we are the highest emitter in the world, without knowing the consequences. The United Nations Framework on Climate Change funded to assist all the countries to quantify their emissions. We were very proud before the international community in telling that we are having only 4 per cent of the global emissions while we are having 17 per cent of the population of the world. Of course, global average may be 23 per cent. When it is compared to the other countries, we are emitting only 4 per cent of US, 8 per cent of Germany, 9 per cent of UK and 10 per cent of Japan. Yesterday, my colleague Shri Kapil Sibal told what are the greenhouse gases—carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. In terms of quantification, our emission in 1994 were is, according to the UN Report, 793 million tonnes carbon dioxide in 1994, 18 million tonnes methane and 0.017 million tonne nitrous oxide.

What is going on in this country with regard to climate change or global warming? As I put it earlier, a single country in this globe cannot protect the climate change, cannot speak exclusively for climate change. It is a universal phenomenon. If at all India is not emitting and some other country is emitting, then automatically the climate will be changed. For that, Kyoto Protocol came into existence. Regarding Kyoto Protocol, the Members are aware that there is a war between the developed countries and the developing countries. According to us, we are emitting only four per cent while per capita emissions of the US, UK and Australia, are the highest in the world. According to the development, they are having more industries, more aluminium factories and more distilleries. So, developed countries are emitting more whereby climate is changing and because of the climate change, the developing countries are going to be affected.

Now, there are parallel talks going on at WTO regarding climate change. A few days back, the Prime Minister gave a statement in the WTO also that the developed countries wanted to discuss non-trade issues while it was earlier promised that non-trade issues will

not be permitted in the WTO. Now, the developed countries are coming and pressing us, stating that these environmental issues must be discussed in the WTO itself. So, such a significant debate is going on in the world. Under Kyoto Protocol, full protection was given to the developing countries and developing countries, including India, are having no commitment at all in the Kyoto Protocol. It was accepted because we are the lowest polluter. Whoever is polluting this globe has to pay more.

According to the Kyoto Protocol provisions, India is very safe and our emissions are within the limit. But we cannot give any commitment for further reduction. We were very categorical about it before the international community whether it is the United Nations or any other forum constituted by various countries. I am saying this because we are having bilateral talks with other countries like Australia, USA, Canada, etc. We were very categorical about it in the G-8 Plus 5 Environment Ministers Conference also held recently in Germany.

Yes, our emission is very low when it is compared with other developed countries, but we cannot give any commitment. At the same time, some people including hon. Members in the House are thinking that India is polluting more because Kyoto Protocol does not bind India for reducing emission. This stigma is totally wrong, and it must be removed from our minds. Even though we have no commitments for reducing GHG emissions under the Kyoto Protocol, yet we are taking very hectic, speedy and effective steps to reduce our emissions.

Before going into the details about the Kyoto Protocol, there is the issue of global warming. How can we reduce global warming? Kyoto Protocol is there, and it says that all developed countries must reduce their emissions. Further, the developing countries need not give any commitment, but they must see that they take effective steps to reduce emissions according to their capabilities. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would request the hon. Minister to kindly yield for a minute.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please let him conclude his reply, and you can speak after he concludes his reply.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the issue of global warming was to be discussed further. There was a ruling from the Chair that there will be further discussion on the issue of global warming. Thereafter, the hon. Minister would reply to the discussion. Today, this issue suddenly came up, and no Member has taken part in the discussion. I would request you to kindly give us some time to ask some clarificatory questions from the hon. Minister after the hon. Minister concludes his reply. We would like to ask some clarifications from the hon. Minister regarding some important issues, which we have in mind.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is all right.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Thank you, Sir.

SHRI A. RAJA: Although there is no express commitment under the Kyoto Protocol, yet the Government of India is very much concerned about issues like climate change and emissions. Two systems are available under the Kyoto Protocol for reduction of emissions. One is domestic, and the other is international. What is the international outlet available under the Kyoto Protocol? It is called the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project. CDM project is a system where the developed countries reduce emissions in the developing countries using technology and financial support. This reduction of emission can be discounted in the account of the developed countries. This is the system available under the CDM. India is having the highest potential account in the CDM projects. Nearly, 599 projects have been cleared so far under the CDM projects, and India is one among the biggest achievers in this regard.

What are the domestic endeavours? It is not only the Parliamentarians, but even the laymen are thinking that India is not bothered about reducing emissions since as per Kyoto Protocol, developing countries have no commitment to reduce GHGs. We were very deeply

concerned about the Kyoto Protocol even though there is no expressed commitment. How can I say this? The manner in which the power projects work in this country has been contemplated in the Electricity Act 2003 itself. I can mention the detailed steps and the measures being taken in this regard.

If electricity is produced through coal or any other material, then there will be pollution. In order to reduce emissions and reduce pollution, we are switching over to hydro and renewable power. Nearly, 3.26 million biogas plants; 34.3 million Improved wood-stoves; 3,50,000 solar lanterns; 1,77,000 solar home lighting systems; 41,400 solar street lighting systems; and 4,200 solar pump-sets have been installed in this country since 1994. ....(Interruptions)

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY (Jadavpur): What about the percentage in terms of total energy that we require?

SHRI A. RAJA: That is different. How much we are going to consume and how much we need is a different issue. ....(Interruptions)

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY: It is less than one per cent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let the Minister conclude his reply.

SHRI A. RAJA: What I want to submit before the House is that we are trying to switch over the technology in the power sector in accordance with the U.N. Convention on Climate Change.

What about our emissions? As I told you, it is only 4 per cent, when the global average is 23 per cent. Sector-wise, from the energy side, the emission is 61 per cent. Supposing we are accounting for 100 per cent emission, then the emissions from the energy sector alone constitute 61 per cent. Naturally, our prime concern must be to see that the energy sector is reformed in such a way that the emissions are reduced by the induction of new technologies. That is why, we amended the Electricity Act, 2003, and we started giving priority to hydro electric power.

**DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY:** That was not the main purpose of amending the Electricity Act of 2003.

*[Translation]*

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Your statement will not go on record. Let the Minister complete his reply and then are your question. *[English]* Do not intervene like this.

**SHRI A. RAJA:** A provision has been made to switch over to it. Hydro power initiatives worth 50,000 MW, over 50 per cent from RoR projects, are to be accomplished by 2012. These are the commitments made by the Power Ministry. These are the domestic measures that we are taking in our country, notwithstanding the Kyoto Protocol commitments which were given to the developed countries. Therefore, the feeling that is there in the minds of many people that since India has no binding commitments under the Kyoto Protocol, it is allowing the emissions very freely is a wrong notion. The Government of India is deeply concerned about it.

When the Environmental Protection Act came into existence, in this very House, the then Prime Minister Shrimati Gandhi said: "The Government is very keen that this world, this universe, this globe which was inherited by our forefathers has been entrusted to us to give it safely to the future generations." The advice given by Shrimati Gandhi is very well taken by the Government, and we are making all efforts and endeavours to improve the climate.

**SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO :** Sir, I want to raise only one point.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to seek clarification on one point. The Minister gave a very well prepared and well-studied reply. First of all, I want to thank him for the same. However, in his reply, he missed one very important aspect.

Regarding tropical rain-forests, a study was made by Deborah and David Clark of the La Selva Biological Station in Costa Rica, and Charles Keeting and Stephen Piper of the Scripps Institution who reported that trees

in rain-forests grow slowly in warmer night temperatures, which is the hallmark of climate change in the tropics.

We come within the tropics. Therefore, the amount of natural rain-forest cover which we have and the tropical forest which we have, have the capacity to regenerate itself. You have spent crores of rupees in plantation. Had you spent that much amount of money on the protection of the rain-forests and tropical forests, there would have been a marked improvement in the climate change.

*[Translation]*

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** You have had your say. Now please sit down.

*[English]*

**SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO:** Sir, India is also a signatory to the Clean Air Act of 1970 to which amendments were made in 1977 and 1990 to reduce sulphur nitrogen oxide particulate emissions from various types of industries. We have not applied this Clean Air Act in our country in true sense. Will the Minister take up these two reforms, that is, one on the tropical and rain-forests and the other on the clean air.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** No other queries please.

**SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO :** Sir, we want a clarification from the Minister.

**SHRIMATI TEJASWINI SEERAMESH (Kanakapura):** I am only requesting the Chair that the House should be allowed to have an elaborate discussions in the near future on this issue of global warming.

*....(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

**MR CHAIRMAN:** This is not the right way. The discussion is over now.

*[English]*

**SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panskura):** Sir, he is the mover of the Resolution.



SHRI C.K. CHANDRAPPA: Sir, we may be in a hurry to wind up the show, but that is a different matter. ...*(Interruptions)*

He may be in a hurry to wind up the show. That is a different matter. ...*(Interruptions)* I was very disappointed with the manner in which the discussion, which was termed by the Speaker as one of the most important discussions, is wound up. One of the main points raised was the unilateral withdrawal of the United States from the Kyoto Protocol. We suggested that India should take the initiative to mobilize the developing countries the non-aligned countries and put up a global fight and stand against the United States, about which the Minister even did not mention. I would like to know as to what is the opinion of the Government on this? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN: Hon. Minister spoke about shifting from thermal power generation to hydro-electricity. In my State in Orissa, many developers are coming forward to set up all these projects. What the Government is going to do to ensure zero emission from these thermal power stations set up all over the country? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: This is not the procedure .

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. RAJA: Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the USA is a signatory, whereby they quantified their own emission levels and they disclosed as to how much is their emission level in comparison to other nations. We gave all the details as to how much is the emission levels of India. Sir, hectic negotiations are going on. Even a few days back—when it was disclosed by our hon. Prime Minister that under the WTO—it was promised that non-trading issues will not be discussed. For the first time, developed countries including the U.K., the U.S.A. wanted to discuss non-trading issues including environment in the WTO. What I wanted to submit before the House is, under the Kyoto Protocol on par with the WTO, there is a war going on between the developed and the developing countries, where we are

pressurizing the developed countries to comply with their existing commitments and to take lead for accepting deeper commitments for future periods. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Your statement is not going on record. Please sit down.

....*(Interruptions)\**

*[English]*

SHRI A. RAJA: How can we compel them? We cannot compel them. At the same time, we are mobilizing with all the developing countries including Brazil, China in this regard. ....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, please address the Chair.

....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI A. RAJA: In Kyoto Protocol, all developing countries are behind India. We are negotiating on behalf of developing countries. But I must disclose one more point that though they are not signatories to Kyoto Protocol, some of the developed countries including Australia wanted to attempt in the other way, notwithstanding the Kyoto Protocol, to address the issue. The Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Energy and Climate, whose partners include India, China, Korea Australia and Japan, comprise one half of the world's population, seek to address poverty alleviation, economic growth, air pollution and energy security. ....*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Nothing except the speech of the Minister will be recorded, Shri Chandrappan.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

SHRI A. RAJA: We are the forerunners and we are pressurising other developed countries to meet the Kyoto Protocol commitments. ....*(Interruptions)*

14.44 hrs.

**BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE****Thirty-Eighth Report***[English]*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS  
AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND  
BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI):  
I beg to present the Thirty-Eight Report of the Business  
Advisory Committee.

14.45 hrs.

**DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193****(II) Price Rise—Contd.***[Translation]*

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (Ratnagiri): Sir,  
my speech on price rise had remained incomplete. I  
start from where I had left. I had brought into the notice  
of hon. Minister of Finance that he makes several  
announcements in each budget speech but he has said  
nothing about rising prices in his budget speech. This  
is what I was saying in my speech. If I say anything  
wrong the hon. Minister of Finance may correct me.

Today a disturbing scenario emerges in prevailing  
circumstances in our country. Cars worth rupees ten  
lakhs to rupees five crore are coming on roads. Along  
with this it is also correct that in our country many  
people can hardly manage two square meals and are  
dying from hunger. The main reason for this is rising  
prices. I don't think that any measure is being taken by  
the Government to check the soaring prices. Before the  
budget I had proposed a scheme in respect of small  
farmers under the title 'Kisan Jiwan Yojana'. I wanted  
this scheme to be announced by the hon. Minister of  
Finance in his budget speech.

Sir, even today more than 60 per cent population  
of the country lives in villages and depend on agriculture  
for their livelihood. Out of them 50 per cent are small

farmers, which are known as marginal or mini marginal  
farmers. These farmers do not have any land or possess  
less than a hectare of land, and some part of this land  
is barren. The same situation prevails in each state of  
our country. For such small farmers we have passed  
National Rural Employment Scheme Bill in the House.  
Hon. Minister of Finance had referred this scheme in  
the House and said that there will be guarantee of  
employment under it. We have given guarantee of  
employment to the people living below poverty line.  
Farmers work tirelessly in their fields throughout the year  
but what they get is far less than that of their labour  
and cost. With this he is unable to look after his family.  
He takes loan from banks, the loan increases so much  
that he becomes unable to repay it and commits suicide.  
I had given a suggestion that as small farmers possess  
some land, so they are not covered under employment  
guarantee scheme, therefore his employment, the labour  
he does in fields be taken as national employment and  
any one member of his family should be given guarantee  
of hundred days employment. I had sent this proposal  
in black and white to hon. Minister of Finance. I would  
request hon. Minister of Finance to consider this once  
again. With this guarantee of hundred days employment  
the farmers would find themselves better equipped to  
fight the soaring prices.

I would like to give one more suggestion. Prices  
are rising each year and slogans are also raised against  
it every time. Announcements are made to check the  
prices. When Shiv Sena and BJP government was in  
power in Maharashtra and Shri Manohar Joshi was the  
Chief Minister, he had started a scheme to check  
soaring prices and provide relief to the poor. Under PDS,  
which is a very popular scheme, food grains are  
provided to the poor and people living below poverty  
line, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and forest  
dweller at cheaper rate. It is a very good scheme  
through which food grains are provided to the poor. The  
Shiv-Sena-BJP Government had taken a decision that  
the prices of wheat, rice, one pulse, one edible oil and  
sugar will remain same till they remain in power. We  
did not let the prices increase. The results were very  
good. Whatever subsidy the government had to provide,  
it provided from its coffer but prices of the commodities

[Shri Anant Gangaram Geete]

provided through PDS remained same from the first day till the last day of fifth year. If the Government really wants to check the prices it should take decision on the line of decision taken by us. For this it may fix a period of five or ten years. Our government did not let the prices of five commodities to be provided through PDS viz. Wheat, Rice, one pulse, one edible oil and sugar to rise. ...*(Interruptions)* It was also said that the prices of Kerosene, which is used to cook food, will also be checked.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have enumerated six items.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEELTE: There are six items including Kerosene.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now you please conclude lest it may become seven items.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: There is no need to reach at seventh item.

Mr. Chairman Sir, if this scheme is not started then we shall not be able to fight and check rising prices. The poor suffer most due to rising prices and due to starvation there is no way before them but to commit suicide. They should be guaranteed that in PDS they will get these commodities for one-two-three or at least five years at same price. I want the Government to announce such scheme here, only then we shall be able to provide them relief from price rise otherwise no one can do anything, except slogan raising in regard to checking rising prices.

[English]

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK (Kendrapara): Sir, I may be permitted to speak in Oriya.

[Translation]

\*Mr. Chairman, Sir, 'Price Rise' is a problem of the common man. The common man expects the Government to control the prices of essential commodities and to protect his interest. But the escalation of prices

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\*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Oriya.

today has hit him hard. And the worst affected are the poor, the farming community, the labourers and the workers who are in the unorganized sector. These are the people who live life on very uncertain terms. They have nothing to fall back upon. They face natural calamities, an unregulated market system, the loan-burden of the local money-lender and several other problems. Out of desperation they commit suicide. They have no social security measure to protect them. The Government claims to have taken steps to give social security to the workers in the unorganized sector. But the tangible impact is yet to be seen.

The Government takes pride by claiming that the economic growth rate is very satisfactory. Both our Prime Minister and Finance Minister are learned economists. Even then they fail to see the ground realities. The economic growth has resulted in making the rich more richer and the millions below the poverty line poorer. We need to do self-introspection as to why even after 60 years of independence starvation deaths still take place, bonded labourers still toil hard and helpless farmers still commit suicide. Prices of essential commodities are sky-rocketing, but the primary producers of these commodities are not getting their due. The unregulated market system has failed to give the farmers any sense of security. The market today is being controlled by a small minority. That is why the farmer is not even getting back his input cost in terms of investment. The Government takes credit that it has flooded the economy with loan-facilities, for 417 the farmers. But the reality is, when a farmer approaches a nationalized bank for loan, he gets nothing but harassment. He gets frightened by all those complicated terms and conditions of the bank. He then runs to the local money-lender to borrow money on a hefty interest rate.

Agriculture in our country depends mostly on the vagaries of nature. Sometimes nature plays havoc. Natural calamities destroy crops and the quantum of return gets adversely affected. Farmer fails to pay back the loan and the burden pushes him to commit suicide. In this context the crop insurance provision should come to the rescue of the hapless farmer. But that does not

happen. The reason being administrative bottlenecks. The administrative unit to disperse insurance amount till now remains the block. Many a times political parties have demanded in this House that Panchayats and not blocks should be taken as the unit. But that has not happened. The Government is yet to come out with a concrete policy in this regard. For many agricultural products the Government has not fixed a price. I would like to cite the example of 'Turmeric'. A few days ago turmeric producers had sat on a 'Dharna' at Jantar Mantar. In the absence of a pricing policy the turmeric cultivators are selling turmeric at Rs. 20 per kg to the middlemen. Whereas we, the consumers are buying the attractively packaged turmeric at Rs. 100 per kg. So you can well guess how severely the farmer's interest is affected. The Government should announce a minimum support price for turmeric and there should be more number of Government depots to sell the produce at a fixed price. In the absence of a fixed price the farmer is indulging in distress sale. The middlemen are snatching away the profits of the farmers and controlling the markets. The Government has no authority or control over these market forces. Since the farmer is not getting his expected return from agriculture, he is giving up his age-old profession. As a result, quantum of production is on a decline. Once upon a time we as a nation were self-sufficient in foodgrains. Now we are importing the same from outside. In the name of industrialization cultivable lands are being handed over to private players. Recently the Government has given permission to private companies to open retail chain of stores on agricultural lands. Gradually our market will go to the hands of the Multi National Corporations and the Government will have no control over them.

The impact of price-rise can be known from the recently held Assembly election results of different states. The debacle of the ruling elite in this election is certainly due to price-rise. Even the Government has acknowledged the fact. Unless something is done quickly the Government will bear the consequences. Thus I urge the Government to be cautious and mend its ways. The price of essential goods should be controlled. The PDS system should be more efficient

and people-oriented. The market should be freed from the clutches of black-marketeers and profit-seeking unscrupulous elements. The people should get protection and their interest should be the foremost priority of the Government.

*[Translation]*

15.00 hrs.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for permitting me to participate in such a important debate. I think in the last several sessions there was hardly any session in which we have not discussed price rise. But the Government has not been able to come out with any concrete measures. Rising prices are not being controlled. We have not been able to provide any relief to the suffering commonman. Today we are in the Government but when we were in opposition our main objective or problem or struggle was only against price rise. We had gone to the people on the issue of price rise. But what is happening? Have prices come down? We should do introspection in this regard. We must do introspection whether we have kept our promises which we made to the people? I think we have not been able to keep our promise.

Sir, I would like to give a small example. The hon. Finance Minister talks about GDP, growth rate and other technical things which are beyond the comprehension of the commonman who lives in villages. 75 to 80 per cent of the population in the country does not know about GDP and growth rate. The commonman is only worried about getting two square meals a day. Can we say with all conscience that we have been able to provide it? Are we able to provide even the minimum to them. I would like to question ourselves. It is a good thing that GDP and the growth rate is on the rise. I would like to thank the hon. Finance Minister for this. But I feel that this has not benefited the commonman in any way and you must also be feeling this. I would like to point out that we have been ruling the country for the last three years now and we have not been able to live up to our promises of bringing relief to the people and bringing down the prices. With your permission, I would like to present an example of the rising costs of

[Shri Ram Kripal Yadav]

things. Wheat, rice and pulses are essential commodities and form our staple diet. I will quote their rates. We had come to power after defeating these people in the year 2004. Wheat cost Rs. 950 per quintal in 2004 but now in 2007 it costs Rs. 1700 per quintal. ...*(Interruptions)* You may be getting it at that rate. Rice used to cost Rs. 940 per quintal, now it costs Rs. 1090 per quintal. Basmati Rice cost Rs. 2900 per quintal earlier, now it is being sold at Rs. 4400 to Rs. 4600 per quintal. The cost of Arhar dal has gone up from Rs. 2300 to Rs. 3200 per quintal. The price of Urad dal has gone up from Rs. 1600 to Rs. 4000 per quintal. Sugar has gone up from Rs. 1225 to Rs. 1700 per quintal. 15 litre mustard oil now costs Rs. 910 whereas it used to cost Rs. 810 earlier. Besides, the prices of all other essential commodities including fruit and vegetables are touching the sky, what is the reason for this? Have we tried to delve into the reasons for this? Will GDP help to feed the hungry? Sensex and many such issues are discussed which are not understood by ordinary people like us. The hon. Finance Minister would surely explain it to us. I would like to point out that prices are increasing unchecked. What is the reason for this? We are not able to find the answer to this question. It is the question of livelihood of 20 crore people. These people would be satisfied even if they get only roti and salt to eat. We are not taking due care of rickshaw and thela pullers, farm-labourers, pan and bidi sellers, This country has always adopted double standards. It is not a new thing. There is an India which exists for the rich and there is another India where the poor people and the villagers live. What may be happening is that all our efforts are going towards providing more and more facilities to the 3-4 per cent rich people in the country.

But 75 per cent of the people working in fields are in trouble and distress today. It does not augur well for future as long as the 75 per cent people of the country are in trouble and distress. The people of middle class families are crying their hearts out. They are reeling under price-rise and are in great distress. You have been representing the people for the last many

years. When you will go to the people, you will feel yourself what you have been doing? What had you promised before elections and what are you doing? The situation is grave. I would like to tell hon. Minister of Finance that if we do not mend our ways and take concrete measures, the people will not forgive us. I would like to say, through you, that there are certain things which can be done.

We have not been fulfilling the basic needs. Today the farmers are in trouble and distress. Hon. Members were discussing today that the farmers are losing their enthusiasm for farming and the cities are enticing them. We are not paying the remunerative prices of their produces which they are growing by toiling hard. They are losing charm for farming and we are not taking any measures to check that. To what extent we are helping the farmers? How much help have we been providing to the farmers who toil hard for feeding us. What is our budget for them? We are not paying attention to this. The economy of this country depends on farming and if they lose their zeal for farming, what will be the fate of this country? Therefore, I would like to tell the Government, through you, that our production is decreasing because we are not providing facilities to the farmers. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have exhausted the time allotted to you.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, I will sit down if you ask me to sit down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have already spoken for five minutes. You may say one more point.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, whatever I am saying so because I belong to the ruling alliance and we are duty bound to the Government. But I am speaking out of pain. There is no politics in it. If you mend your ways, we will follow suit. ...*(Interruptions)* That is why they are laughing here. No it is all their doing. During their tenure they promoted hoarders and blackmarketeers. ...*(Interruptions)* The number of hoarders and profiteers has increased during their tenure. The entire House has to ponder on the ways to contain this price rise. We have to be unanimous

on this issue, then only the price rise can be contained. We should do something for the people who have sent us all to Parliament with such a great commitment to represent more than 100 crore people instead of fighting with each other and wasting the time of the House. ...*(Interruptions)* hurling abuses at and insulting each other. But we are not discharging our responsibilities towards the people who have elected us. So it is time for the friends in the opposition that they thought over this point. Hon. Advaniji, Atalji, Madam Sonia Gandhiji, Pranab Mukherjeeji, Gurudasji and other prominent Members are present here. We all have to think over the issue to check the price rise. Why are they not excluding the essential commodities from future trading? Last time they excluded one item and that is all. Why are they not strengthening the PDS? We used to provide foodgrains to the poor under PDS which is in very bad shape presently. Why are they not including other items in future trading so that they are in a position to control the price? But they will not do so. I don't know what compulsions they have but I would like to say that if they do not control the price rise, they will have to face the consequences. They will have to strike a balance between production and supply. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, you conclude, please.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Sir, they will have to put the storage and distribution system of essential commodities in order. Hoarding and blackmarketing of essential commodities will have to be checked. I would like to thank the hon. Prime Minister who had made an appeal to the Chief Ministers of the States. Most of the Chief Minister are expected to cooperate with them but I would like to remind them that they are in power. They can make a law to control the things. They have got vigilance and other mechanism to gather information. Lodge the hoarders into the jails who are causing price rise against the interests of the poor. These people sitting in front of us have received support from the hoarders and blackmarketeers. These people are responsible for the present situation. In the end, I would like to suggest some points to check the price rise.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, foodgrains, edible oils, pulses

and other essential commodities should be kept out of the future trading. The Essential Commodities Act and the Consumer Act should be reviewed and made more stringent to take penal action against the hoarders and the blackmarketeers which the Government is not doing. Only writing to the Chief Ministers is not going to help. The government should issue instructions and enforce the law strictly. There is no blanket ban on export of pulses which is causing a lot of hardship. I would urge the Government to further strengthen the PDS. Its ambit should be increased if need be. Supply of essential commodities should be ensured so that the poor can get them at cheaper rates.

15.11 hrs.

*[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]*

The Government should provide irrigation facilities, improved seeds, agricultural implements and pesticides to the farmers at subsidized rates in order to improve agricultural production. The farmers are growing food grains to feed us. The Government should provide incentives for agriculture. I want to ask the Government as to why it is not providing incentives to the farmers. The prices should be controlled to make the commodities available in the market. If the Government does not put a check on these things, the price rise cannot be controlled, this can spoil our future. We still support the policy of fixing the prices. I want to bring on record the slogan of our guru Dr. Lohiaji—"Mahangai Roko, Bandho Daam, Nahin to Hoga Chhakka Jamm." If the prices are not controlled to give relief to the poor then, lakhs and crores of workers like us will be compelled to stage traffic jams. We have to compel the Government. The people, the poor have expressed faith in us and we represent them, we are not supposed to remain mute while extending our support to the Government. Certainly, we are going to continue our support to the Government but at the same time would also point out the wrong doings on its part. If they (the Government) mend their ways, the price rise can be checked. I would request the Government to extend relief to the poor, otherwise we are not going to be mute spectators. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Will traffic jams lead to a fall in the prices?

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the democratic set up, we have no other means than staging traffic jams. If the Government does not perform, it has to face the consequences in the form of people's ire and it should be prepared to face the same.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are discussing a sensitive and important subject. On the side of the treasury benches as well as on the side of the opposition, there is a common concern about price rise, which we call inflation, and how it affects the common man. Like my good friend Shri Ram Kirpal Yadav, who spoke last mentioned, this debate occurs from time to time, in fact in every session. Price rise occurs because of a variety of factors. In fact I saw some smiling faces from the other side when Shri Yadav compared the prices of today with the prices that existed three years ago. Likewise, we can compare the prices that existed three years ago with the prices that existed nine years ago; and we can compare prices that existed nine years ago with the prices that existed ninety years ago.

What we must understand is, I say with respect, not trying to tell anyone what he or she does not know that prices rise because incomes rise, because wages rise and because demand rises. ...*(Interruptions)* Please listen to me, I may be right or I may be wrong. Prices of commodities, prices of gold, prices of wheat, prices of rice, say 15 years ago, are not the same as today. What we are trying to moderate is the increase in the rate of the rise which is what we measure as inflation. In no country the prices do not rise. Even in most developed countries, prices rise by two per cent. The Maastrich limit is that prices should not rise beyond three per cent a year. The Reserve Bank of India says in India, given our economic situations, prices should not rise say beyond 4.5 per cent to 5 per cent a year. The Government has said and I say this—it is our goal to keep the inflation to around 4 per cent to 4.5 per cent a year. So prices will rise. What we are collectively

debating is as to how to moderate the price rise, keep it within limits so that as wages and incomes rise, people will not be burdened with the price rise. That is the core of the issue before us and, therefore, I want to take a few minutes to explain why there has been a spurt in prices today and why is it different from the spurt in prices say four or five years ago and what measures the Government is taking to moderate the price rise.

Sir, while the WPI which is the usual measure to measure inflation is around 5.6 per cent today, two weeks ago it was close to 6.7 per cent. There has been a moderation in the last two weeks. It is too early to say whether that moderation will continue, but I am hopeful that it will continue. The primary reason behind this inflation rate is what we call the Primary Articles Group. The Primary Articles Group consists of food articles as well as other primary non-food articles. In this Group, price rise has been 10.84 per cent on April 28, 2007.

Sir, I want to take this opportunity to briefly list the causes behind this and 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 the commodity prices, particularly crude oil. Now crude oil this morning was at 67 dollar a barrel. You will recall that some months ago, it moderated to about 50 dollar a barrel. The Government reduced prices twice by two rupees and one rupee a litre on petrol and diesel. But crude oil prices have climbed back to 67 dollars a barrel. The metal prices have hardened year on year by about 57 per cent in the year 2006. In recent times, in no calendar year has metal prices increased by 57 per cent. In India, the metal prices have increased by 11 per cent as on April 28, 2007. Let me illustrate with a few examples. The international price of the Indian basket of crude oil increased from 47 dollars US per barrel in May 2005 to a peak of 71.29 dollars in July, 2006. It came down to about 52 dollar a barrel in January, but since then it is climbed back to 67 dollars a barrel. The price of US red hard wheat which was 152 dollars per metric tonne in calendar 2005, went up to 212 dollars per barrel in October, 2006. Similarly, the

price of palm oil which we import in large quantities, per metric tonne went up from 422 dollars in 2005 to 707 dollars in April, 2007.

The prices of copper per metric tonne went up from \$ 2866 in the calendar year 2004 to \$ 7766 in April, 2007. There is a three-fold increase. Iron ore during the same period went up from \$ 38 to \$ 77. In metals, there was a large increase in prices of lead, nickel, tin and virtually every metal. All this clearly impacts the Indian Industry, the Indian Manufacturing and all the downstream activities. We have no control over these prices. Some metals are produced in India. But most of the metals, and a large quantity of metals, are imported by the Indian Industry. We import palm oil. We import crude oil.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: What is this? This is very improper. This is very unfair. The Minister is replying to a very important debate. If he is interrupted like this, how will he reply? If you have anything to say, you can say later on. I cannot allow this. This is very unfair.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: He cannot go on replying to your running commentaries.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All of you are very knowledgeable. I am sure, you have made your contribution. Let him reply. You are passing a judgment on every sentence. This is not the way of conducting a debate .

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I am trying to point out why there is price rise. ...(Interruptions) I would ask the hon. Members to kindly extend the courtesy of allowing me to give you the reasons behind this price rise.

I will come to wheat, paddy and sugar-cane in a moment. At the moment, I am talking about the primary articles group which is triggering inflation. The primary articles group is growing by over 10 per cent. These prices have an impact upon the Indian Industry, have

an impact upon the Indian consumption because palm oil is one of the primary articles. Wheat prices are decided by wheat prices the world over. Wheat prices have hardened in India as he has just now pointed out. The world over, wheat prices are hardening. The farmers in India expect a much higher price when they find that international prices are growing, international prices are increasing. Palm oil does impact prices here because edible oil prices the world over harden. It has impact upon the farmer here. He expects a higher price. The point is that we are talking about primary articles group in which all articles have showed a very high price the world over thanks to a variety of reasons. The main reason is that there is a huge demand in some countries; especially China and India.

I come to the second reason. The second reason is the supply-demand mismatch. I have said this before. I want to say this again. It has nothing to do with last year or the last two years. Look at what has happened. The supply demand mismatch in essential articles started with sugar. I am coming to the very points that you want to know. It started in the middle of 2005. ...(Interruptions) It started in the end of 2005 with sugar. When the new crop of sugar-cane came and sugar prices moderated, sugar prices have moderated by almost Rs. 3 to Rs. 4 a kilo. It extended to wheat. Now it has extended to pulses. We must understand why the supply-demand mismatch is there and for how long the supply-demand mismatch will be there.

The area under food-grains has stagnated between 120 million hectares and 125 million hectares for the last ten years. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Unless he yields, I cannot allow you. I am sorry. I cannot allow you. Nothing is to be recorded.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Prabhunath Singh, I beg of you to sit down. This is not the way of doing things.

...(Interruptions)

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\*Not recorded.



MR. SPEAKER: What are you doing? I do not know. Do you want to dictate how the Minister should reply? Then, what are you doing? This is very unfortunate. I can only say it is very unfortunate.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: In this important forum, a very important issue is being discussed. You are not allowing the Minister to reply.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is heard by anybody in this world.

I am appealing to all the leaders to control their Members. A Minister is replying to a debate on a very important matter concerning the common people and you are not listening to him. Is this the way for the House to function? I will not allow this.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry, I cannot allow this. Please do not record anything.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: If you do not want to hear him, I will conclude the debate.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN' (Begusarai): He is defending price rise. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: What are you talking?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, if I give the reasons why there is price rise, they are saying I am justifying price rise. Let them understand what I am saying. They wanted to know why there is price rise. I am trying to tell them why there is price rise and what steps we are taking to control it. ...(Interruptions)

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\*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: I find that Members are not willing to listen to the Minister. This has become a disease with us.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If he yields I will allow. You know how parliamentary debate is conducted.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, such reply by the hon. Minister will induce further rise in the prices. So we stage a walk out from the House.

15.26 hrs.

(At this stage Shri Prabhunath Singh, Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh 'Lalan' and some other hon. Members left the House.)

[English]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (Bangalore South): He is defending the price rise. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Nobody is defending the price rise. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not record anything.

(Interruptions)\*...

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, at the risk of repetition, let me say nobody is defending the price rise. If hon. Members wish to appreciate the steps which the Government is taking and if they wish to suggest what steps the Government should take, I respectfully submit that first we must try to understand—and I am trying to explain to the best of my ability—why this price rise has taken place and then I will tell them what measures we are taking. ...(Interruptions) I am sorry, that is not correct. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: If you have delivered the

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\*Not recorded.

judgement that it was due to the wrong policies, then the Minister need not reply.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, it seems they do not want to know why it is happening. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not record anything.

(Interruptions)\*...

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Finance Minister, unless you yield, I will not allow anybody.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I am not yielding.

MR. SPEAKER: Please go on with your reply.

[Translation]

SHRI RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Mr. Speaker, Sir...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This is very bad that so senior Members are also interrupting.

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, if we shut our eyes to these facts, we will not be able to find an answer. These are facts which stare at our face. We cannot shut our eyes to these facts. These are underlying causes. We must address the underlying causes, not the superficial wounds. I am trying to explain what are the underlying causes and what steps we are taking to address the underlying causes.

The first is—and I say this with respect, please bear with me—that the area under foodgrains has stagnated between 120 million and 125 million hectares. Of this, the area under wheat has stagnated between 25 million and 27.5 million hectares and the area under paddy has stagnated between 41 million and 45 million hectares. This is the position for the last 10 years. Leaving the outlier years, the production of wheat has stagnated between 68 million and 73 million tonnes and

the production of rice has stagnated between 85 million and 91 million tonnes. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panskura): Who has to take responsibility for this? ...(Interruptions)

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I will answer that. ...(Interruptions) Sir, I am grateful to them that now they are asking me why there is stagnation. But, at least, first let me lay the ground work. I will now deal with why there is stagnation.

Sir, productivity has also stagnated. In the case of wheat, the productivity has stagnated for the last 10 years at 2700 kg per hectare and in the case of rice it is approximately 1,950 kg per hectare. These are structural issues in agriculture. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, please do not respond to this. I once again appeal to hon. Members not to disturb the Minister. If I find that Members are not willing to listen to him, I will close the debate.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: The structural issues in agriculture can be addressed only if we increase the irrigated area of land, only when we increase irrigation facilities, introduce new seeds, rationalize the use of fertilizers, provide storage and post-harvest facilities, improve production and productivity. There are no short-term answers to the problems that afflict our agriculture. Agriculture requires long-term answers. Given these structural deficiencies and structural difficulties, what are the steps we are taking to address the price rise, I am coming to that in a moment.

The third reason, it may surprise you, is public expenditure is on the rise and justifiably so because of the flagship programmes of the UPA Government, because of the NCMP commitment to increase expenditure in the social sector, especially, education and health. Public expenditure has doubled or trebled in many sectors.

As expenditure increases, demand increases. When there is a certain amount of stagnation in the supply side, when demand increases, it has an effect on prices.

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\*Not recorded.

[Shri P. Chidambaram]

We must recognize that this public expenditure is something which Parliament has consciously voted upon. We have not taken counter cyclical measures of reducing public expenditure because it will affect the poor people, because education will be neglected, because health will be neglected, because the road building programme will be neglected.

Year after year, this House has voted larger public expenditure. I have come to this House with larger outlays. I defend those outlays. They are necessary, they are justified. Let us recognize that they will have an impact on prices.

Under the third reason, let us take, for example, Minimum Support Price of wheat. Should the Minimum Support Price of wheat be increased or not? It should be increased. When you increase the Minimum Support Price of wheat, as we have done and increased it to Rs. 850 per quintal—in fact, in three years we have increased. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[Translation]*

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): It has risen from Rs. 700 to Rs. 1400.

...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: No please, unless he yields, I will not allow.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do not record a word.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I would request Md. Salim to please try to understand the reasons. ...*(Interruptions)* Nobody is blaming him...*(Interruptions)* All that we are trying to say is that these are the reasons. ...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, just now you heard...*(Interruptions)*

MD. SALIM (Calcutta-North East): Sir, we are walking out in protest.

15.32 hrs.

*(At this stage, Md. Salim and some other hon. Members left the House.)*

*[Translation]*

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Hon. Minister is justifying the price rise. They are importing wheat at a price of rupees 1200 per quintal, this is bound to lead to a spurt in prices. ...*(Interruptions)*

*[English]*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Nobody is justifying it. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI GURUDAS DASGUPTA (Panskura): Sir, we are not satisfied with the reply, so we are walking out.

MR. SPEAKER: He is stating all the facts.

15.33 hrs.

*(At this stage, Shri Gurudas Dasgupta, Shri Anant Gangaram Geete and some other hon. Members left the House.)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let there be peace after they walked out.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, they should listen to me, after all I have listened to all of them ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is being recorded.

*(Interruptions)\**

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, I will answer them. If they want the figures for six years, I will give them those figures...*(Interruptions)* Please have patience for five minutes. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: If you were aware then why did you include it in the Common Minimum Programme?...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, if Shri Malhotra will be patient, I am going to refer to the figures in their Government...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I think, enough is enough.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: No, I do not allow. Senior Members are behaving in this fashion. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): Is he happy with the price rise?

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Is he happy? I am not happy, he is not happy.

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not record a word.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

MR. SPEAKER: No questions please. Mr. Finance Minister, do not respond to any unauthorized question.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, take, for example, the Minimum Support Price of wheat. We are proud, we are happy that we have been able to give Rs. 850 per quintal. This was Rs. 620 per quintal and we have increased it to Rs. 850 per quintal. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: There is no point in linking it with that. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Malhotra, this does not behave your status. You are opposing every sentence.

...*(Interruptions)*

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\*Not recorded.

PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Sir, we are not satisfied with the reply, so we walk out.

15.34 hrs.

*(At this stage, Prof. Vijay Kumar Malhotra, Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy and some other hon. Members left the House.)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, Mr. Ananth Kumar made some very interesting and controversial points. He said that the period...*(Interruptions)* He should listen to this now...*(Interruptions)* He says, 'in 1979-80, presumably referring to the rule of Janata Party, we witnessed the lowest inflation'. I wish to remind him that in 1979-80, the WPI inflation was 17.12 per cent, one of the highest in the decade...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Only the Finance Minister's statement will be recorded.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, Vajpayeeji and Advaniji will bear me out, in 1979-80, the inflation was 17.12 per cent and coupled with that there was a negative GDP growth. The GDP growth was minus 5.2 per cent...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please carry on, Mr. Finance Minister.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Sir, he provoked me to point this out. Mrs. Indira Gandhi led the Congress Party to a resounding victory in March 1980. She took two years to moderate the inflation and put the country back on the growth path. It took two years. Go back to the figures. ...*(Interruptions)* You asked for the figures and you are getting them. I will talk about NDA Government now. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Do not write. Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)\*...*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: Likewise, there is a

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\*Not recorded.

[Shri P. Chidambaram]

myth that the period of the NDA Government witnessed low inflation. I am not justifying it; I am not scoring debating points; it is not my intention to say this. But if I am taunted again and again, before I outline measures, I have to give these figures. I have pointed out more than one occasion, in three out of six years the average inflation was more than 5.4 per cent. It was 5.9 per cent in 1998-99; 7.2 per cent in 2000-01; 5.5 per cent in 2003-04. This will interest Shri Ananth Kumar if he is listening to it somewhere. The year 2000-01, in 48 out of 52 weeks, inflation was over 6 per cent; in 22 of those weeks, it was over 7 per cent; during 12 of those weeks, it was over 8 per cent, hardly a record to be proud of. As the NDA Government was laying down office on 1st June 2004, inflation had once again touched 6 per cent. These inflation figures must also be correlated to growth figures. The average GDP growth in the first five years of the NDA Government was 5.32 per cent. Even if we add the sixth year, which witnessed high growth on the back of very low growth in the previous year, the average comes to only 5.85 per cent. Hence the NDA Government can be characterized as a period of low growth together with moderate to high inflation. What is the record that he is proud of? I admit that last year, average inflation was 5.4 per cent. I said it in my Budget Speech. But in three out of the six years it was over 5.4 per cent. Nobody asked at that time why is inflation over 5.4 per cent; nobody asked what are the reasons for that inflation. Did you not say that inflation is high because of the demand being high? Did you not say that inflation is high because commodity prices are high? Did you not say that inflation is high because production is low and supply is low? How do the economic reasons change from regime to regime? How do the economic causes change from Prime Minister to Prime Minister? We are trying to understand as to what is happening to the economy in India, in the world. We are trying to understand the reasons and I am trying to explain how each of these reasons is being addressed.

Sir, I take no comfort from the facts that I pointed out about 1977-80 or 1998-2004. I take no comfort at

all. Let me assure Vajpayeeji and Advaniji, I take no comfort at all. All I am pointing out is that we must try to understand what the underlying causes are. Unless we address the underlying causes, we cannot moderate price rise to a level which is accepted as tolerable today, which is about 4 per cent to 4½ per cent.

After the UPA Government took over in May 2004, we succeeded in moderating inflation to below 4.5 per cent by June 2005. For most of the next 12 months, it remained around 4.5 per cent. In fact it touched a low of 3.3 per cent in August 2005. I concede that beginning June 2006, there has been an upward movement of WPI. We are here to discuss the reasons for rise in prices and I shall do my best to explain the steps taken by the Government to moderate inflation. I may add that WPI we touched a high of 6.5 per cent in February-March appears to be moderating. For the week ending 28th April, WPI was 5.66 per cent. This is still above the range indicated by the RBI; it is still above what I would call the tolerance level of the people of India. Every effort is being made to moderate inflation to below 5 per cent and brings it close to 4.5 per cent. At the same time, I wish to point out to the hon. Members that the growth in the three years of UPA Government has averaged 8.6 per cent, a full three percentage points higher than the average growth in the NDA Government or in any decade in the past since Independence.

I have given three reasons. I will very quickly say that the fourth reason is this. The higher rate of growth of GDP has stimulated higher demands for goods and services. This is reflected in high growth of credit as well as in the fact that many industries are working in near-full capacity. Take for example cement. As a result, pricing power has returned to manufacturers and sellers.

Finally, I come to the large capital flows. I am sure, Vajpayeeji and Advaniji will understand, as many do, if they only will shed their masks and understand the real reason. Look at the capital flows into the country.

FDI net increased from 2.4 billion in 2003-04 to 3.7 billion in 2004-05 and 4.7 billion in 2005-06. On a balance of payment basis, FDI, in the first nine months of 2006-07, increased by 5.8 billion, and the year has

ended with FDI of 16 billion. Strong flows under the different items of the Capital Account resulted a large capital flow. Take, for example, remittances. Remittances, last year, are estimated to be 26 billion dollars to 28 billion dollars; FDI is 16 billion dollars; export earnings come in; ECB comes in; and as a result, foreign currency assets of RBI grew by unprecedented 46.8 billion dollars in 2006-07, of which the valuation gain is 10.8 billion.

These are the five reasons why there is pressure in prices, high demand, high capital flows, and high commodity prices. The fact that public expenditure is high especially in the flagship programmes in respect of education and health, justifiably so. We justify this expenditure. These are the reasons why prices have been under pressure.

What are we doing to deal with this? There are only three broad sets of measures that can be taken to moderate prices. The first is fiscal measures. Now, a number of fiscal measures have been taken. As against the normal applicable duty of 50 per cent, we allowed private import of wheat at five per cent, we made it zero duty; customs duty import of pulses has been brought to zero; import duty on palm oil has been cut twice, first by 10 points and again by 12.5 points. We are maintaining the tariff value. Customs duty on cement has been made zero. Peak rate of basic customs duty of non-agricultural products has been reduced to 10 per cent, selected raw materials and capital goods have been reduced to 5 per cent to 7.5 per cent. Additional customs duty and counter-veiling duty on edible oils has been removed. Customs duty on sun flower has been reduced by 10 percentage points and again by 15 percentage points. Excise duty on petrol and diesel has been reduced. Excise duty on a large number of food products has been reduced. Therefore, on the fiscal side, whatever steps can be taken in customs and excise have been taken, and we are willing to take more fiscal steps if the hon. Members have any suggestions.

Now, I come to the monetary measures. RBI has taken a number of monetary measures. The Cash Reserve Ratio has been increased by 25 basis points each on six occasions—on December 23, January 6,

February 17, March 3, April 14 and April 28—to reach 6.5 per cent. The repo rate has been revised upward five times in 2006-07 by 25 basis points on each occasion to reach 7.75 per cent.

RBI has also increased the risk rate for several sectors. Year after year, credit is growing by 30 per cent; non-food credit is growing by 30 per cent. RBI has moderated it because we do not want overheating in some sectors. RBI is moderating it without affecting growth.

So, monetary steps have been taken. We are willing to take further monetary steps, and we will take more monetary steps. But fiscal and monetary steps work in the medium to the long-term. The immediate problem is how to augment the supply side. Unless the supply of wheat, the supply of sugar, the supply of pulses, the supply of milk and the supply of rice are enhanced or augmented immediately, there will not be any moderation in inflation. Take, for example, sugar. It is a classical example. We had poor sugarcane crop and, therefore, the output of sugar was low and the sugar price was high. But what happened last year? We had a bumper sugarcane crop. Now, the farmers are saying that sugarcane is not being taken by the factory. One or two farmers are reported to have committed suicide because sugarcane is not being taken by the factory. There is a glut of sugarcane and the price of sugar has collapsed. The price of sugar has reduced by four rupees a kilo. In many parts of India, today, the retail price of sugar is less than the price which is paid for levy sugar, and the sugar mills are now saying: "We are going to suffer losses. We would not be able to pay the sugarcane farmer." Be that as it may, that is a separate issue, which the Ministry of Agriculture is addressing.

It is supply alone, which will moderate prices of essential food articles. We must augment the supply of wheat, we must augment the supply of pulses, and we must augment the supply of edible oil. What have we done?

The STC imported 55 lakh tonnes of wheat last year and this year also the Ministry of Agriculture has

[Shri P. Chidambaram]

made it very clear that we will import wheat to augment the supply. The decision was taken to release up to four lakh tonnes of wheat under open market sales scheme in February-March. There is ban on the export of pulses with effect from June, 22, 2006, ban on the export of wheat and skimmed milk powder from February 9, 2007. NAFED has executed a contract for import of 49,300 tonnes of pulses. The entire quantity was received in July-October period. To increase availability of pulses, NAFED has executed a new contract in December, 2006 for import of 30,000 tonnes of pulses out of which 26,837 tonnes have been shipped up to April 26, 2007 and in 2007-2008, the current year, the public sector agencies are expected to import an additional 15 lakh tonnes of pulses.

For a sustained improvement in agricultural production and productivity, the Budget has proposed a number of measures to increase irrigation, availability of improved seeds, institutional credit and fertilizers and measures to accelerate the adoption of new technologies through a revamped training and visit system.

We are taking every step to augment the supply. Take the example of pulses. There are not too many countries which grow pulses that India consumes. There is only Myanmar, Turkey and some chickpea in Canada and some pulses in Australia. These countries themselves can only spare us a certain quantity. We have taken every step to augment supply of pulses, edible oil and wheat. As the new crop of wheat has come in and will come and the new pulses crop comes in, I am confident that the prices of these essential food articles will moderate.

There was some question about PDS and food subsidy. Let me quickly answer it. Hon. Members raised the issue about the PDS. I want you to kindly look at these figures. I have with me figures showing the allocation of rice and wheat to all the States for BPL, APL and Antyodaya Anna Yojana and off-take against the allocation for five years from 2002-2003 to 2006-2007. I implore you to please carefully look at these figures. The off-take of both rice and wheat as a

percentage of allocation beginning 2002-2003 was 27.2 per cent, 33.8 per cent, 41.1 per cent, 43.6 per cent and in the last year 54.6 per cent. Hon. Members will note that the percentage has been rising every year, especially in the three years of the UPA Government. Nevertheless the highest off-take is only 54.6 per cent of the allocation. I hope I am making myself clear. We allocate food grains but they lift only a part. The highest lifting has been 54.6 per cent last year. The highest off-take was in 2006-2007 and this amounted to 434 lakh tonnes of rice was allocated and only 212 lakh tonnes of rice was lifted and 146 lakh tonnes of wheat was allocated and only 104 lakh tonnes of wheat was lifted. There is, therefore, no question of not allocating adequate quantities to the PDS. The problem is at the other end. The States must take more of the allocations and distribute the foodgrains more efficiently.

Sir, you will recall that a demand was made—why are you not taking de-hoarding action. We wrote to all the Chief Ministers saying—please take de-hoarding action. Only seven States have responded. Which are those States? Three States—Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh responded and they have taken de-hoarding action. Two States—West Bengal and Kerala—have responded and they have taken de-hoarding action. Delhi has taken de-hoarding action and Gujarat has taken de-hoarding action. I am not trying to give a political flavour. The political flavour is very clear. Four States, two States and one State have taken de-hoarding action. What about the other States? Why are they not taking de-hoarding action? The same power is available to the States. The same Act applies. But they are not taking de-hoarding action. We can only ask the State Governments to take de-hoarding action. The machinery is with them, the powers are with them.

Therefore, there is no question of not allocating enough to the PDS. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY (Berhampore, West Bengal): What are the details of off-take of PDS? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I have given you the figures. ....*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: He has not yielded.

SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM: I will give it to you later.

Then the question was—what are we doing to PDS prices. Let me say this loud and clear. The last time PDS prices were revised was on July 1, 2002.

Today, the economic cost of rice is Rs. 13.95 per kilogram. We are issuing it to APL at Rs. 7.95, to BPL at Rs. 5.65 and to Antyodaya at Rs. 3 per kilogram. The economic cost of wheat is Rs. 11.64 per kilogram. We are issuing it to APL at Rs. 6.10, to BPL at Rs. 4.15 and to Antyodaya at Rs. 2 per kilogram. Why are we doing this? We are doing this to restrain prices so that the PDS wheat and PDS rice is available at a price which was last revised in July, 2002. We are not increasing the prices. If only they had lifted more quantities and distributed more quantities at this price, it will have a moderating effect on prices. So, what is it that the Government at the Centre is not doing to help the State Governments to moderate prices?

Then, there were some questions that subsidy bill has come down. That is a very superficial reading. The subsidy has been around Rs. 25,000 crore a year. While the quantity lifted under PDS has increased every year, I just gave out the figures, it may appear that the food subsidy bill has remained more or less constant. The reason is that food subsidy bill includes the carrying cost of food stocks. Since the stock of food in the public stocks has declined over the last two years, the carrying cost has come down and therefore, the subsidy bill has remained constant. It is not because we have reduced the subsidy to the consumer. The subsidy to the consumer is the figures which I have just read out. The subsidy to the consumer is intact. In fact the subsidy has increased; the food stocks have come down and the carrying cost has come down. That is the first reason.

The second reason is that Food Corporation of India is financing its operations today more efficiently. Therefore, it is able to show savings on the head 'interest'.

Sir, there were some questions about leakages and

diversions in the PDS. To get an independent feedback, the Government commissioned two Evaluation Studies, one by the PEO of the Planning Commission and the other by ORG-MARG. These studies were received in March and September 2005 respectively. The reports of the studies were sent to all the State and UT Governments. Four regional Conferences and one national Conference of State Food Secretaries and State Food Ministers were held. Based on the discussions and feedback in these Conferences, a 9-point action plan was jointly formulated. Action taken is regularly reviewed by the Department of Food to minimise scope for diversion. The Department has rationalised allocations and off-takes of wheat and rice. The Secretary, Food and PDS, Government of India has written to all the Chief Secretaries in March 2007 impressing upon them the need to strengthen and expand the PDS.

Sir, I would say that while some of the causes behind price rise are beyond our control, we have taken monetary measures and we have taken fiscal measures. The inflation is 5.4 per cent. It will moderate as these measures take effect. In the short-term, the Government is taking all the measures within its power to augment supply and supplies were augmented of wheat, paddy, rice, sugar, milk, palm oil and edible oils. Prices will moderate as we have done before. As we had moderated prices in 1980 and as we moderated prices in 2004-05, I am confident that the prices of essential articles will also moderate as these measures take effect.

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15.53 hrs.

## VALEDICTORY REFERENCE

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the Tenth Session of the Fourteenth Lok Sabha, which commenced on 23 February 2007, is coming to an end today.

The first part of this Budget Session commenced with the Address by the hon. President to the Members of both the Houses assembled together in Central Hall and adjourned on 20 March 2007. The second part of the Session commenced on 26 April, 2007.



[Mr. Speaker]

During the Session, as many as 32 sittings spread over 119 hours were held, of which 17 sittings were held in the first part and 15 sittings in the second part of the Session.

During the Session, the House passed the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address on 8 March, 2007 after a debate lasting for more than 12 hours.

The Budget (Railways) and the Budget (General) for the year 2007-08 were presented on 26-2-2007 and 28-02-2007 respectively.

Discussions on the Budget (Railways) for 2007-08, Demands for Grants on Account (Railways) for 2007-08 and Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for 2006-07 lasting for 12 hours and 49 minutes were held, before passing the Demands along with the related Appropriation Bills and the Resolution regarding approval of recommendations in Fifth Report of Railway Convention Committee (2004) on 9-3-2007.

The House also had discussions lasting over 17 hours on the Budget (General) for 2007-08, Demands for Grants on Account (General) 2007-08 and the Supplementary Demands for Grants (General) for 2006-07, before passing the said Demands along with the related Appropriation Bills on 14-3-2007.

During the second part of the session, the Demands for Grants in respect of Budget (General) for 2007-2008 relating to the Ministries of Labour and Employment, Science and Technology and Home Affairs were discussed for 15 hours and 32 minutes before being voted in full. All the outstanding Demands for Grants (General) of the remaining Ministries were submitted to the vote of the House and voted in full on 28th April, 2007 and the related Appropriation Bill was passed. Later, on 3 May, 2007, after discussion lasting over 8 hours and 44 minutes and spread over two days, the House passed the Finance Bill, 2007.

During this Session, the House passed 22 Bills. Some of the important Bills passed were the ones replacing the Ordinances issued earlier, namely, the

Sports Broadcasting Signals (Mandatory Sharing with Prasar Bharati) Bill, 2007; the Banking Regulation (Amendment) Bill, 2007; the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (Amendment) Bill, 2007; the Taxation Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2007; the National Tax Tribunal (Amendment) Bill, 2007; and the National Rural Employment Guarantee (Extension to Jammu and Kashmir) Bill, 2007; the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Amendment Bill, 2006; the Electricity (Amendment) Bill, 2007; the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order (Amendment) Bill, 2006 (Amendment of the Schedule).

The House had fruitful debates lasting over four hours on an important matter of global and topical relevance under Rule 193, namely, on Global Warming. The House also had debates lasting about two hours on the issue of price rise. I am thankful to all the hon. Members for their very effective participation in the discussion on the issue of global warming.

During the current session, three important matters were raised by way of Calling Attention in response to which the concerned Ministers made statements. As many as 57 statements were made by the Ministers on various other important subjects.

Coming to the Private Members' Business, 14 Private Members' Bills were introduced during the Session. One Bill, namely, the Agricultural Workers Welfare Bill, 2005 seeking to provide for the welfare of agricultural workers and to regulate their employment and conditions of service and for matters connected therewith was withdrawn by the leave of the House after a fruitful debate. Another Bill, namely, the promotion of Self-Employment Bill, 2006 seeking to encourage self-employment among educated unemployed youth remained inconclusive.

A Private Members' Resolution urging the Government for formulation and implementation of the comprehensive food and nutrition security scheme aiming at total eradication of hunger from the country remained part discussed.

During this session, 621 starred questions were listed, out of which 75 Questions could be answered

orally. Thus, on an average, about 2.34 Questions could be answered per day. Written replies to 5,928 Unstarred Questions were laid on the Table.

In this Session, the Departmentally Related Standing Committees presented 67 reports.

About 156 matters of urgent public importance were raised by the Members after the Question Hour, and by sitting late in the night. Hon. Members also raised 324 matters under rule 377.

In this Session, we lost over 73 hours of time due to interruptions, and forced adjournments. The House also sat late for 19 hours and 51 minutes.

I once again take an opportunity to emphasize that for effective functioning of a Parliamentary democracy, active participation of all sections of the House is of prime importance, more so when matters of national and international importance are taken up for discussion. However, in spite of my earnest request, some of the very important legislative and financial business before the House had to be completed without discussion. While conceding a Member's right to ventilate his views on any particular issue, I would like to reiterate that there is no better alternative or substitute other than a structured discussion on the floor of the House within the parameters of the Rules of Procedure.

Finally, I would like to thank the hon. Deputy-Speaker and my colleagues in the Panel of Chairmen for their cooperation in the completion of the business of the House. I am extremely grateful to the hon. Prime

Minister, hon. Leader of the House, hon. Leader of the Opposition, hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Leaders of various parties and groups as well as the Chief Whips apart from the hon. Members for their cooperation. I would also like to thank, on behalf of all of you, our friends in the Press and the Media. I take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General and the officers and staff of the Lok Sabha Secretariat for their dedicated and prompt service to the House. I also thank the allied agencies for their able assistance in the conduct of the proceedings of the House. Hon. Members may now stand up as *Vande Mataram* would be played.

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16.00 hrs.

## NATIONAL SONG

*(The National Song was played)*

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*[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned *sine die*.

16.01 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned sine die.*

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**Annexure-I****Member-wise Index to Starred Questions**

| Sl. No. | Member's Name                    | Question No. |
|---------|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 1       | 2                                | 3            |
| 1.      | Shri Adsul, Anandrao V.          | 611          |
| 2.      | Shri Ahri, Hansraj G.            | 606          |
| 3.      | Shri Athawale, Ramdas            | 615          |
| 4.      | Shri Bhakta, Manoranjan          | 613          |
| 5.      | Shri Chakraborty, Ajoy           | 602          |
| 6.      | Smt. Deo, Sangeeta, Kumari Singh | 619          |
| 7.      | Shri Gadhavi, P.S.               | 609          |
| 8.      | Shri Jha, Raghunath              | 607          |
| 9.      | Shri Jogi, Ajit                  | 605          |
| 10.     | Shri Kharventhan, S.K.           | 608          |
| 11.     | Dr. Pandey, Laxminarayan         | 603          |
| 12.     | Shri Patel, Jivabhai Ambalal     | 617          |
| 13.     | Shri Patil, Balasaheb Vikhe      | 602          |
| 14.     | Shri Prasad, Harikeval           | 618          |
| 15.     | Shri Rao, K.S.                   | 612          |
| 16.     | Prof. Rawat, Rasa Singh          | 610          |
| 17.     | Shri Reddy, M. Raja Mohan        | 620          |
| 18.     | Shri Scindia, Jyotiraditya M.    | 621          |
| 19.     | Shri Shrivajirao, Adhalrao Patil | 611          |
| 20.     | Smt. Shukla, Karuna              | 603          |
| 21.     | Smt. Thakkar, Jayaben B.         | 616          |
| 22.     | Shri Thomas, P.C.                | 604          |
| 23.     | Shri Thummar, V.K.               | 619          |

| 1  | 2                              | 3                      |
|--|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| 24.                                      | Shri Vallabhaneni, Balashowry  | 614                    |
| 25.                                      | Shri Yadav, Anjan Kumar M.     | 618                    |
| Member-wise Index to Unstarred Questions |                                |                        |
| Sl. No.                                  | Member's Name                  | Question No.           |
| 1  | 2                              | 3                      |
| 1.                                       | Shri Aaron Rashid, J.M.        | 5857                   |
| 2.                                       | Shri Abdullakutty              | 5792                   |
| 3.                                       | Shri Acharia, Basudeb          | 5814                   |
| 4.                                       | Shri Adsul, Anandrao V.        | 5850, 5890, 5916, 5929 |
| 5.                                       | Shri Ahir, Hansraj G.          | 5848                   |
| 6.                                       | Shri Ajay Kumar, S.            | 5788                   |
| 7.                                       | Shri Appadurai, M.             | 5778                   |
| 8.                                       | Shri Athawale, Ramdas          | 5780                   |
| 9.                                       | Shri Barad, Jasubhai Dhanabhai | 5761, 5767, 5788, 5839 |
| 10.                                      | Shri Baxla, Joachim            | 5813                   |
| 11.                                      | Shri Bhadana, Avtar Singh      | 5764, 5795, 5857       |
| 12.                                      | Shri Bhakta, Manoranjan        | 5841, 5892, 5917       |
| 13.                                      | Shri Bishnoi, Kuldeep          | 5748, 5829, 5880       |
| 14.                                      | Shri Bose, Subrata             | 5784                   |
| 15.                                      | Shri Chakraborty, Ajoy         | 5842, 5902, 5920, 5931 |
| 16.                                      | Prof. Chander Kumar            | 5773                   |

| 1   | 2  | 3                                  |
|-----|--|------------------------------------|
| 17. | Shri Chandrappan, C.K.                   | 5777, 5811,<br>5870, 5904,<br>5922 |
| 18. | Dr. Chinta Mohan                         | 5799, 5860                         |
| 19. | Shri Chitihan, N.S.V.                    | 5798                               |
| 20. | Shri Chowdhary, Pankaj                   | 5809, 5856                         |
| 21. | Shri Chowdhury, Adhir                    | 5759, 5791,<br>5867                |
| 22. | Shri Deora, Milind                       | 5763, 5837,<br>5929                |
| 23. | Shri Deshmukh, Subhash<br>Sureshchandera | 5782, 5843,<br>5869, 5903,<br>5921 |
| 24. | Shri Dhindsa, Sukhdev Singh              | 5787, 5893                         |
| 25. | Shri Dhotre, Sanjay                      | 5804, 5863,<br>5898                |
| 26. | Shri Gadhavi, P.S.                       | 5849                               |
| 27. | Shri Gaikwad, Eknath M.                  | 5790, 5819                         |
| 28. | Shri Gangwar, Santosh                    | 5810, 5826                         |
| 29. | Smt. Gawali, Bhavana P.                  | 5804, 5863,<br>5898                |
| 30. | Shri Gehlot, Thawarchand                 | 5741                               |
| 31. | Shri Goyal, Surendra Prakash             | 5765                               |
| 32. | Ch. Hassan, Munawar                      | 5743, 5873                         |
| 33. | Dr. Jagannath, M.                        | 5806, 5865,<br>5899                |
| 34. | Dr. Jatiya, Satyanarayan                 | 5746                               |
| 35. | Shri Jogi, Ajit                          | 5847                               |
| 36. | Shri Joshi, Kailash                      | 5755                               |

| 1   | 2                              | 3                                  |
|-----|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 37. | Shri Khaire, Chandrakant       | 5791, 5818,<br>5885, 5890,<br>5916 |
| 38. | Shri Khan, Sunil               | 5797                               |
| 39. | Shri Khanna, Avinash Rai       | 5760                               |
| 40. | Shri Kharventhan, S.K.         | 5827, 5879,<br>5910, 5927          |
| 41. | Shri Koshal, Raghuveer Singh   | 5758, 5836                         |
| 42. | Shri Krishna, Vijoy            | 5771                               |
| 43. | Shri Kumar, Nikhil             | 5759, 5844,<br>5867                |
| 44. | Shri Kumar, Sajjan             | 5795, 5857                         |
| 45. | Adv. Kurup, Suresh             | 5803                               |
| 46. | Sr. Libra, Sukhdev Singh       | 5816                               |
| 47. | Smt. Madhavaraj, Manorama      | 5762, 5926                         |
| 48. | Shri Mahtab, Bhartruhari       | 5775, 5876,<br>5907, 5925          |
| 49. | Smt. Mane, Nivedita            | 5790, 5819,<br>5875                |
| 50. | Shri Meghwal, Kailash          | 5885, 5890,<br>5916                |
| 51. | Shri Mehta, Bhubneshwar Prasad | 5776                               |
| 52. | Dr. Mishra, Rajesh             | 5779                               |
| 53. | Shri Mohale, Punnu Lal         | 5805                               |
| 54. | Shri Mondal, Abu Ayes Mondal   | 5789                               |
| 55. | Shri Murmu, Hemlal             | 5781, 5845,<br>5901, 5919          |
| 56. | Shri Nayak, Ananta             | 5821                               |
| 57. | Shri Oram, Jual                | 5823                               |

| 1   | 2                                       | 3                            |
|-----|---|------------------------------|
| 58. | Shri Owaisi, Asaduddin                  | 5802, 5862, 5897             |
| 59. | Shri Pallani Shamy, K.C.                | 5752, 5832, 5882, 5885, 5912 |
| 60. | Shri Panda, Brahmananda                 | 5807, 5866, 5900             |
| 61. | Shri Panda, Prabodh                     | 5817                         |
| 62. | Dr. Pandey, Lamxinarayan                | 5826, 5881, 5914, 5923       |
| 63. | Shri Parste, Dalpat Singh               | 5757, 5929                   |
| 64. | Shri Paswan, Sukdeo                     | 5780                         |
| 65. | Shri Patel, Kishanbhai V.               | 5801, 5822, 5878, 5909       |
| 66. | Shri Patil, Balasaheb Vikhe             | 5846                         |
| 67. | Smt. Patil, Rupatai Diliprao Nilangakar | 5826, 5857, 5930             |
| 68. | Shri Patle, Shishupal N.                | 5874, 5906                   |
| 69. | Shri Prabhu, Suresh Prabhakar           | 5761, 5767, 5788, 5839       |
| 70. | Shri Pradhan, Dharmendra                | 5826, 5857                   |
| 71. | Shri Prasad, Harikewal                  | 5835, 5889                   |
| 72. | Shri Rajagopal, L.                      | 5769, 5854                   |
| 73. | Shri Ramakrishna, Badiga                | 5783, 5868                   |
| 74. | Shri Rao, K.S.                          | 5834, 5891                   |
| 75. | Shri Rathod, Haribhau                   | 5818                         |
| 76. | Shri Rawale, Mohan                      | 5772                         |
| 77. | Shri Reddy, G. Karunakara               | 5744, 5872                   |
| 78. | Shri Reddy, K.J.S.P.                    | 5758                         |

| 1   | 2                                   | 3                            |
|-----|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 79. | Shri Reddy, Magunta Sreenivasulu    | 5768, 5859                   |
| 80. | Shri Rijju, Kiren                   | 5830                         |
| 81. | Shri Sai Prathap, A.                | 5788                         |
| 82. | Shri Saradgi, Iqbal Ahmed           | 5751                         |
| 83. | Dr. Sarma, Arun Kumar               | 5766, 5838, 5886, 5913, 5928 |
| 84. | Shri Scindia, Jyotiraditya M.       | 5774, 5852                   |
| 85. | Shri Shakya, Raghuraj Singh         | 5781                         |
| 86. | Dr. Shandil, Col. (Retd.) Dhani Ram | 5750                         |
| 87. | Shri Shivajirao, Adhalrao Patil     | 5824, 5850, 5877, 5890       |
| 88. | Shri Shivanna, M.                   | 5745                         |
| 89. | Prof. Shiwankar, Mahadeorao         | 5820, 5874, 5906             |
| 90. | Smt. Shukla, Karuna                 | 5749, 5826, 5884, 5914       |
| 91. | Shri Diddeswara, G.M.               | 5756, 5853, 5893             |
| 92. | Shri Singh, Chandra Bhushan         | 5768, 5812                   |
| 93. | Shri Singh, Chandrabhan             | 5742                         |
| 94. | Shri Singh, Kirti Vardhan           | 5819                         |
| 95. | Shri Singh, Rakesh                  | 5753, 5755, 5864             |
| 96. | Shri Singh, Sugrib                  | 5822, 5909                   |
| 97. | Shri Singh, Uday                    | 5791                         |
| 98. | Shri Singh, Rajiv Ranjan "Lalan"    | 5799, 5800, 5860, 5861       |

| 1    | 2                            | 3                                  |
|------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 99.  | Shri Subba, M.K.             | 5747, 5828                         |
| 100. | Shri Sugavanam, E.G.         | 5754, 5833,<br>5883, 5894,<br>5924 |
| 101. | Shri Suman, Ramji Lal        | 5800, 5861                         |
| 102. | Smt. Thakkar, Jayaben B.     | 5831                               |
| 103. | Shri Thomas, P.C.            | 5825, 5888,<br>5915                |
| 104. | Shri Thummar, V.K.           | 5831                               |
| 105. | Shri Tripathi, Chandra Mani  | 5749, 5830,<br>5881, 5911,<br>5930 |
| 106. | Shri Tripathy, Braja Kishore | 5815, 5871,<br>5905, 5923          |

| 1    | 2                              | 3                                  |
|------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 107. | Shri Vallabhaneni, Balashowry  | 5840, 5887                         |
| 108. | Shri Veerendra Kumar, M.P.     | 5808                               |
| 109. | Shri Verma, Ravi Prakash       | 5824, 5850,<br>5877, 5908,<br>5926 |
| 110. | Shri Virupakshappa, K.         | 5793, 5855,<br>5895, 5918          |
| 111. | Shri Yadav, Kailash Nath Singh | 5820                               |
| 112. | Shri Yadav, Paras Nath         | 5794                               |
| 113. | Shri Yadav, Ram Kripal         | 5796, 5858,<br>5896                |
| 114. | Shri Yaskhi, Madhu Goud        | 5770                               |
| 115. | Shri Yerrannaidu, Kinjarapu    | 5786, 5856                         |

**Annexure-II****Ministry-wise Index to Starred Questions**

|   |                      |
|---|----------------------|
| Civil Aviation                          | : 602, 605, 616      |
| Culture                                 | : 610                |
| Defence                                 | : 607, 615           |
| Food Processing Industries              | : 604                |
| Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises | : 618                |
| Minority Affairs                        |                      |
| Petroleum and Natural Gas               | : 611, 612, 617, 620 |
| Railways                                | : 603, 608, 609, 614 |
| Social Justice and Empowerment          | : 606, 621           |
| Tourism                                 | : 613, 619.          |

**Ministry-wise Index to Unstarred Questions**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Civil Aviation                          | : 5741, 5742, 5743, 5748, 5750, 5758, 5767, 5768, 5769, 5770, 5771, 5777, 5781, 5787, 5788, 5798, 5813, 5825, 5829, 5839, 5840, 5842, 5880, 5887, 5892, 5897, 5904, 5913, 5924             |
| Culture                                 | : 5751, 5766, 5775, 5782, 5783, 5785, 5786, 5790, 5832, 5836, 5841, 5846, 5848, 5879, 5882, 5886, 5888, 5893, 5929   |
| Defence                                 | : 5747, 5757, 5759, 5761, 5762, 5763, 5789, 5793, 5794, 5795, 5802, 5810, 5811, 5830, 5833, 5844, 5857, 5864, 5867, 5868, 5877, 5926, 5927   |
| Food Processing Industries              | : 5784, 5909   |
| Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises | : 5744, 5778, 5797, 5819, 5891   |
| Minority Affairs                        | : 5779, 5860   |
| Petroleum and Natural Gas               | : 5749, 5752, 5756, 5764, 5765, 5773, 5799, 5800, 5803, 5806, 5807, 5808, 5815, 5816, 5822, 5824, 5828, 5831, 5853, 5866, 5873, 5881, 5899, 5900, 5903, 5906, 5914, 5920, 5923, 5930, 5931 |

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Railways                       | : 5746, 5753, 5754, 5772, 5774, 5776, 5791, 5796, 5801, 5804, 5805, 5809, 5812, 5814, 5817, 5818, 5820, 5821, 5823, 5826, 5835, 5847, 5849, 5850, 5851, 5852, 5854, 5855, 5856, 5858, 5861, 5862, 5863, 5865, 5869, 5870, 5871, 5874, 5875, 5876, 5878, 5883, 5884, 5885, 5890, 5894, 5895, 5896, 5898, 5901, 5902, 5905, 5907, 5910, 5911, 5912, 5916, 5918, 5919, 5922, 5925, 5928 |
| Social Justice and Empowerment | : 5745, 5755, 5760, 5780, 5827, 5834, 5845, 5859, 5872, 5889, 5908, 5917   |
| Tourism                        | : 5792, 5837, 5838, 5843, 5915. 5921.  |

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