

taken for deepening the dug wells and for transportation of water to the far flung areas. Since the problem is acute, it is imperative that the pace of work to meet the drinking water problem is accelerated so that timely relief can be provided.

A minimum of Rs. 13 crores is required to undertake works pertaining to drinking water supply in the rural and the urban areas of the State. I request the concerned Minister to provide the amount mentioned above to save the State from drinking water problem. Adequate funds should be provided for the completion of all the ongoing water supply schemes in the State as soon as possible.

- (iv) Need to make the Himsagar Express a bi-Weekly Train and to Provide its Stoppages at Important Stations in the Districts of Kottayam, Pathanamthitte and Alleppey

PROF. P. J. KURIEN (IDUKKI) : Sir, the Him Sagar Express running between Jammu and Kanyakumari was introduced in response to the demand of the public that there should be a train connecting the northern and the southern ends of India. Although it is a weekly train at present, it has become very useful particularly for the Keralites working in the Defence service and stationed in Punjab, Jammu etc.

However, the usefulness of this train has been diminished by the limited stoppages it has at present in Kerala. After Ernakulam, it halts only at Quilon and thus skips three important districts namely Kottayam, Pathanamthitte and Alleppey. It may be mentioned in this context that the maximum number of passengers are from these districts. Thus this long-awaited train has become less useful to people belonging to these districts. From the point of view of revenue to the Railways as well as that of the convenience of passengers, this train must halt at important stations in all the three districts.

And also in view of the heavy rush in this train, it may be made at least a bi-weekly train with a pantry car with

catering facilities which at present are not provided with this train. Therefore, I would request the Government to issue necessary instructions in this regard.

[Translation]

- (v) Need to remove the limit of Rs. 1600/-for payment of bonus to employees

SHRI K. N. PRADHAN (BHOPAL) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, under the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965, the bonus payable to an employee, whose monthly pay or wage is more than Rs. 750, is calculated as if his monthly pay or wage is Rs. 750. Government propose to raise this limit to Rs. 1600 per month.

However, according to the Payment of Bonus Act, the range for eligibility for bonus is Rs. 1600 per month whereas the cost of living as compared to 1965 has increased phenomenally and the value of the rupee has diminished. I, therefore, urge that to meet out justice to all the employees, the eligibility range of Rs. 1600 should be removed to make all the employees eligible for bonus.

- (vi) Demand to give employment to the unemployed residents of district Gonda (Eastern U.P.) in the I.T.I. set up there

SHRI DEEP NARAIN VAN (BAL-RAMPUR) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, district Gonda is the most backward area in Eastern U.P. The economic condition of the people of this area is so miserable that they are finding it very difficult to bring up their families. Thousands of people here are jobless with the result that this region is becoming more and more backward. Keeping in view its backwardness, the Government decided to set up an I.T.I. factory at Manakpur in Gonda District. This factory is now nearing completion but the people of Gonda have not been benefited by this factory so far. Outsiders have been recruited in this factory and the people of Gonda District have got nothing but displacement. It is the policy of the Government not only to compensate the displaced