

[Shri R. K. Malgi]

made by the state government were over and above the ceiling fixed by the planning commission and were in fact made for restoration of funds to the depreciation reserve fund. The state government has already pointed out to the Government of India how this view is directly in conflict with the view held by the Planning Commission in this regard. This issue was also taken up with the Minister of Railways and as desired by him certain information required by the Planning Commission to take a decision has already been forwarded to the Commission.

The central government, Ministry of Railways should therefore, immediately see that the arrears of capital contribution of the order of Rs. 350 lakhs be cleared to the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation before the close of the current financial year, that is 31st March, 1979. Since the hon. Minister is in the House, I should like him to make a statement on my 377.

(iii) SHORTAGE OF WAGONS FOR TRANSPORTING SALT

SHRI VASANT SATHE (Akola): It is reported in the Sunday Standard, Bombay dated 4-3-1979 that salt merchants along the western railway are facing a crippling shortage of railway wagons for transporting their products to consuming centres in various parts of the country and as a result the piles of salt packed in gunny bags are lying along the wharves. In February for example less than half the demands for wagons made by the traders and manufacturers was met by the western railway authorities. In fact the backlog of unmet demands has increased to one month. This is happening despite the fact that the zonal quota on a monthly basis has been fixed by the government salt department. The situation is getting critical and there is every possibility of shortage of salt at the consuming centres. Shri Dandavate is here and he can make a note.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS
PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE: I am listening to what you say very carefully.

SHRI VASANT SATHE: In view of the above I urge upon the government to take immediate action in the matter and ensure that adequate numbers of wagons are provided to meet the situation. I hope the Minister will not become namak haram.

(iv) SETTING UP OF A PETRO-CHEMICAL
COMPLEX IN KERALA

SHRI K. A. RAJAN (Trichur): The Cochin refinery had submitted to the central government a proposal to install a secondary procuring facility in the refinery for the conversion of the furnace oil into LPG and diesel oil. After the implementation of this facility the refinery can process hundred per cent Bombay High crude or imported crude or a mixture of Bombay High and imported crude. This project is estimated to cost Rs. 30 crores. It is highly remunerative also.

Once the proposed secondary processing facility is installed high octane value petroleum could be available with the coming up of the above mentioned catalytic cracking unit the entire straight run naphtha will be available for fertiliser and petrochemical production and the catalytic reformer and the naphtha desulphurisation units will be available for more productive use for making valuable aromatics. In view of the above it is proposed a new aromatic complex should be set up, based on the naphtha available from the Cochin refinery and using the catalytic reformer and naphtha desulphurification mentioned above.

The Kerala Chief Minister had written to the Union Petroleum Minister forwarding a copy of the scheme and requesting for starting an aromatic complex in Kerala. The State government has also offered to invest Rs. 25 crores for down-stream project. Now pre-

paration of a project report for petro-chemical complex is being entrusted with M/s. Engineers India Ltd. The establishment of the complex will help to diversify production at FACT, Cochin and also Hindustan insecticides. I request the Union Government to take urgent steps for sanctioning a petro-chemical complex in Kerala.

(v) RETRENCHMENT OF THE WORKERS OF SIMPLEX CONCRETE PILES (INDIA) PRIVATE LTD.

SHRI KRISHNA CHANDRA HALDER (Durgapur): Sir, under rule 377, I want to mention the following matter of urgent public importance.

The workmen of Simplex Concrete Piles (India) Pvt. Ltd. are under constant repression from December, 1978. The management has unleashed a reign of terror on the workers with the direct help from Delhi Police. The management of the above Company vindictively terminated the employment of 120 workers at Okhla site and Ashok Road-Windsor Place site on 20th December 1978 even without paying them their earned wages. On 8th January 1979 they again retrenched 60 workers at the R. K. Puram site. In all these attacks perpetrated on the workers, the Delhi police directly helped the management and terrorised the workers by carrying on arrests and dismantling the houses of the workers and preventing them from carrying on their protest movement. On 28th January 1979, 70 workers were arrested by the Delhi police in their attempt to suppress the movement against the Simplex management.

I strongly condemn the role of the Delhi Police and demand of the Delhi Administration that the police force be restrained from interfering with the legitimate movement of Simplex workers and take immediate steps for their reinstatement of 180 retrenched workers. I also urge upon the Minister to effectively intervene in the matter for reinstatement of the retrenched workers.

12.55 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET 1979-80— GENERAL DISCUSSION—contd.

MR. SPEAKER: We will now take up further discussion of the Railway Budget. Shri Mohanaragam will continue his speech.

SHRI RAGAVALU MOHANARAGAM (Chengalpattu): Mr. Speaker, yesterday I was discussing the passenger amenities, especially for long distance passengers. Before dealing with the various aspects of the difficulties felt by the passengers in the Southern part of the country, I would rather like to quote the budget speech of the hon. Railway Minister, Prof. Madhu Dandavate. In the concluding portion of his budget speech, he has sought the co-operation of all sections of the House and the people for the development of our country. There he has talked about the lofty peaks of the Himalayas and the sacred shores of Kanyakumari. I appreciate his respect for the development of the country from the Himalayas to Kanyakumari and his patriotism for our country. Because, whenever he comes down the Vindhya, he talks of patriotism and of the area from Himalaya to Kanyakumari.

Yesterday an hon. Member was pointing out that when there is a will, there is a railway and when there is no will, there is survey only.

AN HON. MEMBER: It was mentioned by your voter.

SHRI RAGAVALU MOHANARAGAM: Yes, my voter, Shri O. V. Alagesan. On page 18 of the Budget speech it is stated:

"Surveys for a new broad gauge line from Karur to Madurai and gauge conversion from Madurai to Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu were approved in the supplementary grants obtained in January 1979."