

the order and they are capable of printing and supplying the books in time. It is a very famous company. Therefore, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether he is ready to direct the NCERT to place orders on Jaya Publications to get the books in time.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: There is no problem, for us to get our books wherever they are being printed. (Interruptions)

DR. (SHRIMATI) K.S. SOUNDARAM: Why is he unnecessarily mixing up these things.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA JEET YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to a specific question. Is it a fact that the hon. Minister had called a meeting of the Education Ministers of States and a few experts about six weeks ago? The meeting was convened to ponder over and discuss alleged inclusion of some distorted facts and some material, that is not on the national interest, in textbooks in a few States. I would like to specifically submit that the present Education Advisor of Governor of Uttar Pradesh, had come to the meeting with specific proof regarding distortion of facts at the time of the previous Government. What decision has the Government taken in this regard and whether orders have been issued for the deletion of such things from textbooks?

SHRI ARJUN SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir I myself had made a reference to that when I said that the meeting was convened and a decision was taken to delete distorted facts about which specific proofs were presented. We would ensure after deliberation that no such situation emerges in future.

Oil spill in Bay of Bengal

*863. SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the assessment of damage to marine life and environment caused by the spill in the Bay of Bengal has been made;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof;

(c) whether claims for compensation for the economic and ecological damage suffered and for the money spent on mapping operations has been lodged against the Dutch Oil Tanker owner;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the progress made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b). The research vessel, "Sager Kanya of the Department of Ocean Development with the scientists of the National Institute of Oceanography, Goron board, had undertaken surveys of marine life and environment to collect samples at the area of the oil spill. A second cruise is also planned to study the long-term effects on marine life.

(c) to (e). Claims for compensation for the economic and ecological damage in monetary terms can be made only after detailed scientific analysis of the data which is to be collected by the second cruise of the National Institute of Oceanography, Goa. Insofar as mapping operations are concerned, assessment of expenditure on this account has been provisionally made by the Cost Guard and the Department of Ocean Development which comes to Rs. 13,62,60,329/-.

[Translation]

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is the first such incidence in the Bay of Bengal and probably the Ministry of Environment of the Government of India was not geared to meet such an eventuality to minimise the loss and ensure speedy action. To make good the loss whether the Government of India has taken up the matter with the Dutch Govern-

ment? Has any action been taken against the Dutch company, whose oil tanker caused oil spill and extensive damage? The hon. Minister, who is well versed in making calculations, has given assessment of expenditure which come to Rs. 13, 62, 60, 329. I would like to know the basis of such an assessment?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: It is wrong on the part of the hon. Member to allege that appropriate action was not taken because the accident took place on the 21st and the Coast Guard started action on the next day. Coast Guard carried out spraying from 22nd January to 6th February. The oil spill was so serious that it spread for miles, spreading up to just 10 miles from Nicobar coast. Some stretches of oil spill were 20 to 30 miles long. I myself inspected the spill. I think it is wrong on the part of the hon. Member to make such an assertion that the Coast Guard had not shouldered its responsibility. Rather, it should be praised for it.

As far as the claim is concerned, we have worked out a tentative claim that covers administrative expenses, coordination expenses and mobilisation expenses and it is an interim claim. It is definitely not a full claim. Legal experts have informed the Government that under section 327 of the Merchant Shipping Act we can make full compensatory claim. At present full claim is being assessed and as soon as it is finalized, full claim will be filed by the Government. The claim is being worked out by the Ministry of Surface Transport because in accordance with the 'Maritime Convention' the responsibility lies on this Ministry.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: The Ministry of Surface Transport is also a Ministry of the Government of India. Does the hon. Minister intend to impress upon us that it is the responsibility of another Ministry and there is no coordination between his Ministry and that Ministry? If it is so, then the hon. Minister should tell us the action taken in this matter till date since January by his Ministry? And whether the Government of India took up the matter with the Dutch Gov-

ernment?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: There is complete coordination among the various Ministries of the Government. It is not so as the hon. Member is saying.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Please inform us the action taken by them?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: I am coming to that. I would like to inform the hon. Member that scientists abroad the vessel 'Sagar Kanya' of the National Institute of Oceanography of the Department of Ocean Development Surveyed 6m 400 kms. of the areas from 28th January to 13th February and the detailed analysis is being made. A notice has been served on the Dutch Company by the Director General Shipping.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: Regarding survey I would like to know whether:-

[English]

Are you equipped? Are you equipped for this? Tell me, very frankly, Mr. Minister.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: We are equipped. Our scientists are next to nobody.

SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH: It is not a reflection on our scientists, it is not a reflection on our Coast Guards. Are you equipped for doing this?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: One vessel, *Sager Kenya* had sailed first. They said that they had taken samples of the water. They have taken all the necessary samples required from the affected area. These are being examined in details.

A second vessel, *Gaveshni* is sailing out very shortly for further study. My Ministry has written to the Fisheries Development Commissioner of the Ministry of Agriculture to assess the loss of the fisheries as a result of the oil spill

and they have made a rough estimate that the loss of fisheries would be about Rs. 15 cores as a result of reduction in fish catch which is estimated to be about 15,000 tonnes per year.

At the same time on the basis of the data already collected by the vessel which sailed out earlier and the National Institute of Oceanography, which was done in the first round it was revealed that the Great Channel of the Car Nicobar Island is now free from all effects of the oil spill. The zoo plantations and all forms of plant population on which the fish breeds is quite healthy.

SHRI K.P. REDDAIAH YADAV: It is mentioned that the Government can claim compensation under the environmental clause. I want to know whether the Government has got any such system or method of claiming compensation for the loss of marine life, fisheries, etc. and damages to the environment due to letting out some distillery effluents from the influenced factory owners into the drinking water resources and world renowned lakes like Kolleru in Andhra Pradesh, which was brought to his notice.

MR. SPEAKER: This is not relevant.

SHRI SUDHIR GIRI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is not the first time that such oil slick has taken place in the Bay of Bengal. On other occasions, such incidents took place. And it is a matter that if our coast guards could have been well equipped, the tanker could have been apprehended. But that has not been done. In view of this, may I know from the hon. Minister whether this fact has been highlighted to the ASEAN countries, at least to SAARC countries, for taking remedial measures?

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, it is not correct that adequate action was not being taken. I am repeatedly emphasising it because this was our first major encounter. (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You may emphasise but you need not repeat it.

SHRI KAMAL NATH: Sir, it has been repeatedly commented upon. So I consider it necessary to correct the fact.

Sir, adequate steps have been taken. The hon. Member's question is concerned with as to what we are doing and what we will do in future. Several coordination meetings have been held. A multi-institutional programme for systematic monitoring of the coastal water against pollution is there. This is not a singular effort. This is a continuing effort.

Cancellation of Trains

*864. **SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether passenger trains are canceled every year to meet the freight targets;

(b) if so, the number of passenger trains canceled during each of the last three years in each zone; and

(c) the reasons for not being asked to meet the freight targets necessitating the cancellation of passenger trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K.C. LENKA): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

STATEMENT

(a) In order to meet additional demand of freight traffic during the peak season, sometimes a few passenger trains are suspended for making available additional locomotives. This period also happens to be a lean season for passenger traffic.

(b) In 1990-91, 41 pairs of passenger trains were suspended to conserve diesel oil in the context of Gulf War. In 1991-92, 25 pairs were suspended to carry the peak season freight