

at Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar Islands due to failure and breakdown of Shipping Corporation of India's ferry service during the second week of July, 1995;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the number of stranded passengers, the reasons for breakdown/failure of ferry service and the period for which the passengers were stranded;

(c) the arrangements, made for the rescue and transportation of the stranded passengers to the places of their destination;

(d) whether the Shipping Corporation of India had to bear any extra/additional expenditure on sustaining the stranded passengers, their transportation and payment of compensation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Does not arise.

Visakhapatnam Port.

1056. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to reduce berthing charges at Visakhapatnam Port for ships carrying cargo other than oil and coal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to enhance utilisations of Visakhapatnam Port in 1995-96; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) : No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) The Visakhapatnam Port's designed capacity to handle cargo is 23.35 million tonnes per annum. The target fixed by the Government for the year 1995-96 is about 30 million tonnes, which is much above the installed capacity.

Visit of Union Power Minister to USA

1057. SHRI D. VENKATESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Minister of Power had visited Washington in the month of June 1995;

(b) if so, the main points discussed with US Government and also US Energy firms;

(c) whether all doubts that were in the minds of US officials have been removed;

(d) the total number of power projects that US Government and its firms are setting up in India; and

(e) whether any concrete agreement in this regard was reached?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

POWER (SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL) : (a) Although the Minister of Power did visit the US in June, 1995, a visit to Washington was not on his agenda.

(b) and (c) The Secretary (Energy), USA, in a meeting with the Minister of Power, in New York, expressed concern at the developments over the Enron Power Project. The Minister assured the US Energy Secretary that Government of India would ensure that whatever action was taken by Government of Maharashtra on the project was within the parameters of law, rules, regulations and agreement.

In addresses given at conferences and meetings with prospective foreign investors, the Minister sought to encourage greater foreign investment in the Indian private power sector.

(d) Expressions of interest have so far been shown by US firms in respect of 36 power projects in India including joint venture projects. No power project is being set up by the US Government.

(e) No, Sir.

Visits to Jammu and Kashmir

1058. SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether foreign countries have welcomed the Government's gesture of allowing International Committee of Red Cross to function in the State of Jammu and Kashmir;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have allowed all the countries to visit J&K State and meet the people and also study the situation themselves;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether this decision has also been welcomed by all countries; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID) : (a) and (b) In keeping with our policy of transparency and openness, Government of India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the ICRC granting access to detained persons in connection with the prevailing situation in J&K. This has been welcomed by the international community.

(c) to (f) In the recent years, more than 12,000 foreigners have visited J&K including foreign journalists, parliamentarians and tourists. Delhi-based envoys from the European Union, developing countries, etc. have also visited J&K several times. This has also been welcomed by all countries.

Chemical and Fertilizer Plants in A.P.

1059. SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of fertilizer plants in Andhra Pradesh as on date, indicating whether they are State-owned or centrally owned;

(b) the main fertilizers being produced in the State as on