

LOK SABHA DEBATES **(English Version)**

Second Session
(Twelfth Lok Sabha)



(Vol. II contains Nos. 1 to 10)

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
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Corrigenda to Lok Sabha Debates

(English Version)

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Monday, June 1, 1998/Jyaistha 11, 1920(Saka)

...

Col./line	For	Read
(i)/6	69	66
(ii)/2 (from below)	Shri Yashwant Sihha	Shri Yashwant Sinha
3/32 and 4/4	Mr. Speaker	Mr. Speaker
194/23	280	230
199-200/14 (Col. 5)	7572.00	75782.00
223-224/18 (Col.2)	227226.8	22726.8
226/14	SHRI K.C.KONDAIAN	SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH
243-244/31 (Col.4)	333.57	1333.57

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Monday, June 1, 1998/Jyaistha 11,
1920 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock.*

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Telephone Connections

*61. SHRI D.S. AHIRE :
SHRI BIJOY KUMAR 'BIJOY' :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of persons on the waiting list of telephone connections in the country as on April 30, 1998, State-wise;

(b) the number of telephone connections allotted during the last three years, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government have evolved any scheme for the speedy allotment of telephone connections; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

[Translation]

(a) The number of persons on the waiting list of telephone connections as on 30th April, 1998 is as per Annexure-I.

(b) The number of telephone connections given during the last three years is as per Annexure-II.

(c) and (d) During 1997-98, 32.59 lakhs new telephone connections were provided in the country against a target of 29 lakhs new telephone connection. This is 27% higher than the number of connections provided during 1996-97 (25.64 lakh lines). For the year 1998-99, 33 lakhs new telephone connections were proposed in the Ninth Five Year Plan. This has been revised to 36 lakhs in the Annual Plan, 1998-99. All efforts will be made not only to achieve this target but to exceed it.

Statement-I

*Number of persons in the waiting list as on
30.04.1998—State-wise*

S.No.	State	Waiting List
1.	Andhra Pradesh	219569
2.	Assam	23189
3.	Bihar	65326
4.	Gujarat (Including Dadar, Diu, Daman & Nagar Haveli)	243522
5.	Haryana	100183
6.	Himachal Pradesh	44484
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	30975
8.	Karnataka	123316
9.	Kerala (Including Lakshadweep-UT)	682779
10.	Madhya Pradesh	42193
11.	Maharashtra (Including Goa)	207919
12.	North East (Including Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura)	11350
13.	Orissa	24577
14.	Punjab (Including Chandigarh-UT).	202315
15.	Rajasthan	147293
16.	Tamil Nadu (Including Pondicherry-UT).	329212
17.	Uttar Pradesh	153812
18.	West Bengal (Including Sikkim & Andaman and Nicobar)	148303
19.	Delhi	2251
Total		2802568

Statement-II

*Number of Telephone Connections given during the
last three years, State-wise.*

S.No.	State	Number of telephone connections allotted		
		1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	150021	153606	216487
2.	Assam	20295	18003	36477
3.	Bihar	33115	52368	66294
4.	Gujarat (Including Dadar, Diu, Daman & Nagar Haveli)	134832	163053	213824

1	2	3	4	5
5.	Haryana	52486	60800	73081
6.	Himachal	30212	31452	40176
7.	J & K	5988	15945	20819
8.	Karnataka	139694	189608	254378
9.	Kerala (Including Lakshadweep-UT.)	154033	172775	230010
10.	Madhya Pradesh	81275	75541	102692
11.	Maharashtra (including Goa)	418131	458260	501441
12.	North East (Including Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura)	16433	18056	23030
13.	Orissa	31014	32505	67178
14.	Punjab (Including Chandigarh-UT.)	143569	153560	165969
15.	Rajasthan	100672	113518	147632
16.	Tamil Nadu (Including Pondicherry-UT.)	207452	290082	364546
17.	Uttar Pradesh	151336	216912	313918
18.	West Bengal (Including Sikkim & Andaman & Nicobar)	112463	145052	240152
19.	Delhi	200070	203160	180941
Total		2183091	2564256	3259045

[English]

SHRI D.S. AHIRE (Dulho) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, from the information given, it appears that the Government is paying much attention to giving new connections. However, in rural areas, people are waiting for telephone connections for years together. I would like to know from the hon. Minister of Communications, through you, what special steps are being taken to clear the waiting lists in rural areas as well as in the exchanges in smaller towns.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is a comprehensive list which includes even the rural connections and the connections in respect of small towns. This is not a list of metropolitan cities. This is a State-wise list, circle-wise list and this is a comprehensive list. This includes telephone connections wanted in rural areas as well as in small towns.

SHRI D.S. AHIRE : In my constituency, Dhule, in Maharashtra, there are waiting lists pending since

November 1996. Those wait-listed people are still not given telephone connections. Will the hon. Minister clarify the position?

MR. SPEAKER : It has already been answered.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : The period of waiting list ranges from 10 months to two-and-a-half years. As the hon. Member has stated, there must be some telephone connections for which he must be waiting for the last two years. But I will see to it that all those areas, which are hilly areas where telephone connections are kept in waiting for the last many years, are provided with telephones on a priority basis.

SHRI SUDHIR GIRI (Contai) : Sir, from the reply given in the Annexure-II, it appears that during the period from 1995-96 to 1997-98 about 80,06,392 connections have been effected. Out of these connections, a good number of connections are given in the rural areas. As per the promise given by the previous Government, every village has got to have telephone connections. But those connections have been rendered useless because of the poor quality of equipment. May I know from the hon. Minister whether punitive measures will be taken against the suppliers who supplied poor quality equipment and whether those village telephones would be set right in due course?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will look into the complaints about the poor quality instruments and we will take corrective and remedial measures.

SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch) : Sir, in the reply, the hon. Minister has informed about the number of persons in the waiting list as on 30.4.98. In the case of Gujarat, the number of persons in the waiting list is 2,43,522. My district Kutch is the third largest district in the country which is near the border of Pakistan. There is an imminent danger of war to my district after this nuclear explosion. Though there is a presence of large number of army personnel and security staff in my district yet there is a shortage of telephone facility and the shortage is about 30 per cent. When we ask the authorities, they say that there is neither the material nor the personnel with them. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether she is going to do anything specially for this district in the light of the nuclear explosion.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : In future, never will the hon. Member get this answer from us that we do not have any material or we do not have any instrument. The hon. Member has brought it to the notice of the Minister of Communications and as the Minister of Communications, I am saying that special priority will be accorded to his district.

[Translation]

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : Will the Hon'ble Minister like to state whether issuing the telephone connection is enough? Should it not be in working condition? I have seen that not only in villages but telephone

exchanges of small new markets also are not working. Will the Hon'ble Minister take steps to improve the conditions?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : The Hon'ble Member has raised a genuine question. It is also my concern that deleting the waiting list from the paper and installing the instrument is not enough. Many a time name of the subscriber is deleted after issuing the O.B. number only and it is stated that telephone connection has been given. But till the O.B. Number is issued and a telephone instrument in working condition is installed, we cannot accept that the connection has been provided. I may assure Shri Jakharji that I am making special efforts in this direction.

SHRI RAMNARAYAN MEENA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, waiting list of 1996 for allotment of telephone connection is pending in Rajasthan. I would like to talk mainly about Bundi and Kota Districts. Kota is my Parliamentary constituency where Telephone connections have not been given even after issuing O.B. Number, telephone services remain out of order for months together in Itawa, Nainwa, Siewal, Sangrol area of Kota District. People can not communicate on telephone. Telephone connections have been provided to these areas but nothing is done to keep them in order. When we approach the officers of the telephone department about our problems, they just verbally reply regarding the non-availability of the instruments. I want to know whether the Hon'ble Minister will accord priority to those areas so that the efforts can be made to supply the instrument where telephone connections are lying dead for the last two-three months due to the non-availability of such instruments.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : I have given reply to the question asked by the hon'ble Member while answering the supplementary question asked by Shri Balram Jakhar. Though he has not raised the question of O.B, I myself have raised this issue that the instruments installed are not working. This is not the only problem. Problem is that after clearance of O.B. the name of the subscriber is deleted from the waiting list but still the instrument has not been installed. It is correct that the waiting list of 1996 is pending in Rajasthan. There are other States also where waiting list of about two and a half year is still pending. I would like to assure you that not only the telephones against O.B. will be installed but they will be in working condition also. Now officers of the department will not reply that instruments are not with them. Our main concern is that the telephones should not only installed but they work also.

[English]

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the waiting list in Kerala is 6,82,779. An official statement has come out in the Press that by the end of the year 1998, all persons who are in the waiting list,

will be provided with the telephone connections. Through you, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is correct or not.

There is a classification of rural exchange and town exchange. There are so many anomalies in rural exchange and town exchange. So, I would like to know the criterion for determining a rural exchange and a town exchange. Will the anomalies be rectified?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this is right that the waiting list in Kerala is very high. It is about six lakhs or even more than six lakhs. But that does not mean that the tele density in Kerala is high. What is tele density? This is a telephone connection which is given to every 100 inhabitants. The average tele density in the country is 1.84 whereas the tele density in Kerala is 3.38. That means, given a reason of good economy, the demand in Kerala is enormous, whereas the tele density is high. I must tell my hon. Member that this time also circle-wise, it is the highest in Kerala. We have set a target of 3,25,000 telephone connections for the year 1998-99.

So, this news report is not true that by 1998, the whole list will be cleared, and 3,25,000 telephone connections will be provided in Kerala.

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : What about the rural exchange, Madam?...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister towards the list for 1997-98 in which 20,819 telephone connections have been given in Jammu and Kashmir and approx. 23,000 telephone connections have been given in North-east also. Both these regions are reeling under insurgency conditions. Even when 26 people were killed by extremists in Parankot, the Government came to know about it only after 3 days. Our area is a border area where no means of communications are available. I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister whether priority will be given to these hilly areas so that communication facility may be provided to the people living there?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, allotment of telephone depends upon the demand. I feel that the entire House share concern expressed by Shri Chaman Lal ji. So far as insurgency and militancy prone areas are concerned, when all other means and facilities are severed the only medium of communication left is telephone. Through you, I would like to assure the House that by giving priority to your area as well as to North Eastern states, we shall improve the telephone facilities and will provide more communication facilities.

[English]

SHRI A.C. JOS (Mukundapuram) : Sir, in her reply, the hon. Minister has said that more than six lakhs

telephones are there in the waiting list in Kerala and only three lakhs connections will be given this year. Sir, the present system is primitive one because the Department takes the planned development on the basis of waiting list. My suggestion is that the hon. Minister can give instructions to the Department so that the development takes place on the basis of projections. Wherever necessity arises, it all depends on the waiting list now. The person who had registered himself for a telephone connection, may have to wait for three to four years or even more.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri A.C. Jos, please come to your supplementary.

SHRI A.C. JOS : My question is whether the Department will undertake their expansion and development on the basis of scientific projection of each area's necessity.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : I would like to tell the hon. Member that the planning is not done on the basis of waiting list, planning is done on the basis of projection. We have undertaken a programme of expansion in Kerala. We are trying all upgraded technologies in Kerala. We are also trying even the WILL Scheme. A pilot project has been sanctioned in Kerala for that. The hon. Member must be assured on that count that we are not doing that only on the basis of demand, but we are really doing it on the basis of projections.

Cellular Mobile Services

*62. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the lapses committed by the Department of Telecom (DOT) causing a loss of Rs. 837 crore while giving out licences to eight private companies for operating cellular mobile services in the four metros of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai were detected by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG); and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action proposed to be taken by the Government against the culprits?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) A modified Draft Audit Para (DAP) was received by the Department of Telecom. (DOT) in January, 1998 in which a case has been made out of a notional loss of Rs. 487.86 crores on account of defective fixation of licence fee for the eight licences granted to the private operators for the four metro cities.

(b) A summary of the modified draft audit para is given at para 1 of the statement enclosed. At para 2, the reasons for fixing the licence fee based on the projected demand in 1992, and the call charges prevailing then are indicated. The matter is still under correspondence with the Audit.

Statement

1. MODIFIED DRAFT AUDIT PARA RECEIVED IN JANUARY, 1998.

The contention of the D.G. (Audit) in the draft audit para captioned "Under benefit of Rs. 487.36 crores to metro cellular operators" are summed up as below :

"DOT did not make realistic projection of demand for cellular mobile telephone services in four metros and fixed annual lumpsum licence fee for first three years on the basis of grossly under stated projections of demand made by one of the bidders. It also failed to incorporate suitable provisions in the licence agreement for charging higher licence fee if the actual demand was more than the projections for first three years. This unduly benefited cellular mobile telephone operators in four metros by more than Rs. 354.47 crores in fixation of licence fee. DoT also gave benefit rate but not enhancing the lumpsum licence fee accordingly."

2. The contention of D.G. (Audit) as made out in para (1) above, are not acceptable to DoT for the following reasons :—

- (i) The Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTs) based of GSM standards which was proposed to be started in four metros of the country in early 90s was a new service even by global standards. There was no historical data based on which accurate demand projections could be made. At best, a rough estimate of the number of subscribers and traffic in terms of air time generated by them, could be made for fixing the licence fee. The Government was keen to liberalise the telecom sector with a view to attracting foreign direct investment as well as capital from the domestic markets in the cellular business. Therefore, the DoT did not have the time available to carry out the detailed market research its growth rate, the traffic volume, etc. very accurately to fix the licence fee. Some inaccuracies are inevitable in such a scenario and it should be considered as part of normal business risk.
- (ii) The objective of the Government was to promote this new business which was considered to be very attractive from the foreign investment angle. Fixing a very high licence fee in the initial years would have inhibited the market demand which in turn would result in loss of revenue in terms of traffic volume. The cellular market is highly price elastic. Therefore, for the first three years, a predetermined fixed amount was charged for the first, second and third year. For the remaining seven years, however, the

licence fee is to be computed based on actual subscriber numbers. Another reason for charging predetermined fixed amount for first three years, was to remove any uncertainty in the country. As soon as the market gained enough stability, the period of which was estimated to be three years, the licence fee is to be based on actual number of subscribers.

- (iii) The estimated loss of Rs. 467.36 crores is purely notional. Even if the point about low licence fee is conceded, since cellular market is highly price elastic, the low licence fee no doubt resulted in private operators offering an affordable service to the customer, thereby stimulating demand as well as greater usage of the cellular service. The greater volume of traffic generated generally passes through DoT network. This additional volume of traffic between the cellular for the DoT as DoT network, would result in additional revenues for the DoT as the private operator is required to pay to the DoT for the calls terminating in the DoT network. If this additional revenue taken into account, the notional loss may turn out to be non-existent. Experience in other Circles have shown that a high licence fee invariably inhibits the market resulting in low customer base. Lower volume of traffic means lesser revenue for both the private operator and the DoT, thereby affecting the health of the industry adversely.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN (Trichur) : The answer and the explanatory note attached to it are a clear example as to how the DoT tries to shield the officials responsible for the lapse. The licence fee should have been linked to the actual number of subscribers. That is the easiest method. The DoT has control over them. But the DoT did not do that. Instead, they fixed licence fee on the assumption of subscribers, with the result, the actual number turned out to be five times higher than the DoT assumption.

Again, the companies increased the subscription tariff from Rs. 1.10 for ten seconds to Rs. 1.40 for ten seconds, an increase of 27 per cent, but the corresponding revision in the licence fee has not been made.

MR. SPEAKER : Please come to the question.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : This is a part of my question, Sir.

The corresponding increase must have been made in the licence fee also. There is a lapse on the part of the officials of the DoT. Would the hon. Minister go into it personally and examine as to who are actually responsible for the lapse? Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi is sitting there. He knows that they do not even care to examine the audit objections seriously. They do not even care to examine the Public Accounts Committee's

reports. Ask Dr. Murli Manohar Joshi because he has umpteen number of examples from the DoT.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all, I would like to assure the hon'ble Member Shri Raghavan that we are not replying here to save the skin of any officer of Department of Telecommunication. As far as licence fee is concerned, I would like to inform the House through you that cellular Mobile phone was being introduced first time in India at the time of fixing of licence fee. It was, therefore, thought whether there will be demand of cellular phone or not. If we want to bring revolution in the field of telecommunication and also want to introduce cellular phone, then while fixing the licence fee for the initial ten years, it may be done in such a manner that for the first three years some amount may be fixed and for the subsequent three years licence fee may be linked with the customer number. Initially, due to the fixed licence fee cellular operators will come forward and the demand will be created in the market. Later on, after three years, a fixed amount of 5 or 6 thousand as decided by the department will be charged from the customer as Licence fee. The decision of fixing lower licence fee for the initial three years has been taken to create a new demand in the field of cellulars. There is an audit para on this issue. I would like to tell Shri Raghavan that Department cannot adopt an indifferent attitude towards the audit para and if it does so, it will be wrong on the part of the Department. I would like to assure the House on my behalf that the para is still a draft audit para. The details of the draft audit para which I have given in the House has already been sent to the Comptroller and Auditor General and the reply is still awaited. If C.A.G. accepts our reply, then the draft audit para, will be dropped and if it is not dropped then the responsibility will be fixed. Proper action will be taken but still it is not an audit para it is only a draft audit para. Whatever information has been placed in the House has also been sent to C.A.G.

[English]

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN (Trichur) : Sir, I am very glad that Sushma Swaraj has taken the additional charge of Ministry of Communications. My request is that please spare more time to this Department. There exists an unhealthy tussle between the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India and DoT. It has reached an ugly stage. The tussle is going on. Please try to intervene and end this tussle as soon as possible.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, first of all, I may tell you that the Hon'ble Member should not worry that due to the Information and Broadcasting Ministry, my attention will be diverted from telecommunication. I will reply to whatever you ask. You have asked about T.R.A.I. Although this question is not

at all related but just to make you aware of my hold over the ministry of telecommunication, I can tell the Hon'ble Member that there is no tussle between Telecom Regulatory Authority of India and Department of Telecommunication. The discussion between the two is on the interpretation whether Government is working under T.R.A.I. as a licenser or as a service provider. We have moved the court on this subject. Hearings have been completed in the High Court and judgement has been reserved.

Since the Government and Telecom Regulatory Authority of India cannot decide its interpretation among themselves. Licenser is also under their control. The Court had given its judgement and, therefore, out of court settlement is also not possible by intervention. Therefore, we have referred this matter of giving interpretation to the High Court. There is no other dispute. The dispute is only regarding interpretation. This dispute will come to an end when we receive interpretation from the High Court. Hence you should not worry that being a Minister of Information and Broadcasting, I am not paying any attention towards telecommunication.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Sir, the modified draft audit para mentions of "grossly understated projections of demand made by one of the bidders". Who is responsible for this?

There is a provision in the agreement that the fee cannot be increased for the first three years. The draft audit para says: "It also failed to incorporate suitable provisions in the licence agreement for charging higher licence fee if the actual demand as more than the projections for the first three years. This has resulted in a huge loss to the Department".

I would like to request the hon. Minister to look into these two aspects. Based on the draft audit para, the Department can fix up the responsibility.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Question which is raised by Hon'ble Member is the same as raised in draft audit para. He has not raised any new point and I had given its reply in the beginning. In the beginning we did not know the exact demand. It is true that demand is more as compared to estimated demand. Hence today you can use this word that we had under-projected it and under estimated the demand. Later on it appeared that we have under estimated the demand but as far as the question of increasing the fee is concerned, we have made provision to increase fee after 3 years. We were deciding to fix licence fee for ten years and not for three years. We have not made any provision to increase fee within 3 years. While deciding Licence Fee for 10 years in which a provision was made to link these services with customers after 3 years

because during this period of three years, demand will stabilize. Audit para was made for that only and the reply which I have given here, has already been sent in writing. Let the reply come, only then liability can be fixed. Responsibility can be fixed only when audit para appears finally. At present only draft para has been prepared. C.A.G. has not yet prepared audit para. If C.A.G. is satisfied with our reply, the para will be dropped. Otherwise para will be drafted and after that the question of fixing responsibility will arise. Right now, it is not opportune moment to fix responsibility.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Cellular Services are being made available on large scale in the country for the past 2 years. As far as question of Department of Telecommunication and Government is concerned, they are paid their fees. The foreign companies or indigenous companies charge higher fees for the services which they provide to cellular telephone holders. Sometimes they even charge Rs. 8/- or Rs. 16/- per minute. By paying licence fee to government two companies started their work in different metro cities. I would like to know whether they have been provided with necessary equipment or not in those metro cities?

[English]

May I know whether they have already installed necessary equipment in different cities and metro cities so that they can provide better services to the cellular phone holders. If they have not done so, then I would like to know whether the Government or the Department has any control over those companies, in case such companies fail to provide better services to the cellular phone holders. If the Government do not have any such control, then the sufferers will be the cellular phone holders who pay very heavy price. I am one of the persons who live in Ahmedabad City and who has a cellular phone also. My residential area is hardly three kilometres. From the town or the central area, but still I am not getting better facilities.

So, my specific question is whether the Department has any control over those companies in case they do not have proper installation of equipment or they do not provide better services.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Member has raised two questions—one relates to higher charges and the other relates to the service. He has also asked whether Government has any control over these companies or not. As regards the first question, as it involves capping they cannot charge more than this but if someone wants to charge less, he can do so. As far as the question of government control is concerned, I would like to tell the hon'ble Member that there exists competition in the market and it is the market force which decides as to which service provider will stay in the market. Government cannot decide this

by way of control. For this purpose in every circle two parties were employed, competition is going on and if customer is satisfied with the service he will keep the cellular otherwise he will return it and if he is satisfied with the service of the other, then he will use that. It is correct that such complaints are received and government certainly pays attention to them. In privatisation, it is the competition and not control which decides as to which service provider will stay in the market and who will quit.

[English]

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN (Karad) : Let me first come back to the Audit Para and the draft reply of the Government. There are two main issues. The first is the low tariff which was fixed at the bidding by one of the bidders. It is a very serious charge. Before the Audit Paras get finalised, the Government should have looked into the charge as to whether on particular bidder had influenced a low demand projection. That is the first charge in the Audit Para.

The second charge is that when the call rates were increased, the cellular phone providers got much more revenue. At that time also, there was no question about changing the licence fee. The Government should have seriously looked into that.

My question is whether the Government will allow MTNL or any other public sector company to enter the cellular phone field. Right now, they are not allowed to do it but the MTNL wants to enter into it. I would like to know whether the Government will allow it.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Sir, let me reply to your second question as to whether MTNL will enter the field of cellular phone or not. This matter is already pending in the Court. The question of TRAI is related with this and the judgement of the court is awaited. The arguments or hearing in the case are over and MTNL wants to enter the field of cellular phone. There is a stay in this case and this matter is pending in the court. After judgement, this matter will be decided. This matter is also under consideration of the C.A.G. The issue regarding bidders was also raised and projection was given that only 4000 people will opt for cellular. In the light of these things, demand was projected and decision was taken. In the remaining tenders also the demands of other people were reflected. Only when we know whether one or more bidders had influenced the decision, what was the position of remaining tenders because their number was 100 and whether the projections of other tenders were equal or more than that only then the reply of these things can be given.

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha) : The long answer of the hon. Minister is good enough but we find

that the estimated loss of Rs. 467.36 crore is found to be purely notional. I would say that this is a very serious aspect in which several multinationals as well as other private companies were involved. There has been at least an attempt of embezzlement of funds in this case. This has to be taken very serious note of. We all know that the ruling party who were on this side had wasted almost a month of the Session just on this matter where a bigwig or a heavyweight—who is unfortunately very close to the Government now—was involved in a very serious crime.

MR. SPEAKER : You please put your supplementary.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : He is yet to be chargesheeted and further inquired into. I think when this is the case and when the DoT is short of funds, as you have said in the previous answer, you are not in a position to keep pace with the demands as far as DoT is concerned. So, I would say that the embezzlement or the taking away or the misaccounting of Rs. 467.36 crore has to be taken very seriously and some action has to be taken. I would like to know through the hon. Speaker whether, in particular case, the Government would be pleased to appoint a Committee of Parliament to go into whole question of embezzlement of funds in the cases concerning the DoT, and also the cases concerning the one which I had already mentioned, to have a proper inquiry into the matter so that the truth can be found out, the guilty can be punished, and proper service can be provided to the people.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : Mr. Speaker, Sir, let me first assure the hon'ble Member that we are not taking this case lightly rather we are taking it with as much seriousness as you have raised this question. Secondly as regards the embezzlement of funds which you have mentioned, that case was already pending in court, it is sub-judice and, hence, I do not want to make any comment on that. As regards the third point which you have raised, we have deliberately used the word notional because by multiplying the total customers with 5000 we find that there is a loss of Rs. 467 crore whereas there are many other things also which should be accounted for. For example, the charges of air time. At that time we did not know that instead of 4000, 22000 people would subscribe to cellular service. It is true that 22,000 people opted for cellular but at that time it being a new thing and the market also being new, we were not sure whether it would look attractive or not and, hence, we projected certain demand which proved to be under demand later on. That is why we used the word 'notional'. As I have said C.A.G. which is a constitutional authority is considering the matter. Therefore, it does not seem to me that there is a need to constitute parliamentary committee for this purpose. Let the reply come from C.A.G., after that action will be taken on this.

Development Activities of Tribal Areas

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*63. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY :

DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL :

Will the Minister ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that developmental activities of tribal areas are being stopped on account of the Operation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980;

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

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

[English]

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do, not arise.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY (Ranchi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Minister has given a straight reply to the question in yes or no, whereas the question was whether it is a fact that developmental activities of tribal areas are being stopped on account of the operation of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980? If so, what are the details thereof and what is the reaction of Government in this regard? He has given a straight reply—No, Sir, and the question does not arise.

I would like to inform the hon'ble Minister that the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 which was enacted to maintain balance and protect environment, also contains a provision for protection and conservation of forests in the country. But the work has been done contrary to this Act. As a result of nexus between mafia and forest officials, forests were denuded and the poor and tribals living in the forest area who were allowed to collect firewood and fruits from the forests are being harassed after the enactment of this Act. This nexus has been destroying the forests. In my constituency Ranchi also, one regional office has been opened. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister the number of the people against whom action was taken under this Act and the details of the action so taken? It is amazing that when there is a demand for construction of road or pond for the people who reside in forests and when the representatives of people want to undertake any developmental work like construction of road, shed or pond by using funds at their disposal, the people of Forest Department, file cases against the B.D.O. and other officials as if they are doing their personal work, although no tree was cut there. In this way, this Act is being misused. I would like to know whether an enquiry will be ordered and action taken against those officials?

What the government is going to do to ensure that the poor and tribals who are living in forests are not deprived of benefits which they get from forests as it is the only source of their livelihood? I would like to know the response of Government in this regard.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : I fully agree with the sentiments of the hon'ble Member. Perhaps, he is surprised to find the reply in 'no' only as he thought that I should have said something more. Before the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 came into being, in fact the ordinance was issued on 26th October, 1980 which was later on converted into a law. You will be happy to know that from 1950 to 1980, on an average 1 lakh 43 thousand hectares of forest land per annum was diverted for non-forest purposes. After the enactment of law in 1980 in the last 18 years only, 26 thousand hectare of land per annum has been diverted. This ratio of 1 lakh 43 thousand which pertained to the per year has now come down to 26 thousand. You will be happy to know that after the enactment of this Act, the diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes has come down. I agree with you that the relationship of the tribals with forest is like that of mother and child. As mother is attached with the child similarly the tribals are attached with the forest land. It is only to reduce their problems that we are implementing this law. You will be glad to know that after the enactment of Forest Conservation Act, 1980.

[English]

The diversion of forest land for non-forest purposes has been reduced significantly. Still we are not very happy. But it has been reduced. If it has been reduced, then, it also means that forests which otherwise would have been diverted for non-forest purposes are now helping tribals.

[Translation]

This has been done to protect the tribals only.

Another thing which you want to know is that Forest Conservation Act is creating hindrance in the development schemes like construction of roads and ponds. It is our endeavour to remove such hinderances. 26 thousand hectares of land being diverted every year for non-forest purposes is being utilized for their development purposes. If five hectares of land is required to be diverted for non-forest purposes then the regional office itself is authorised to take the decision. Beyond that, the State Advisory Committee and Central Advisory Committee take decision. After the enactment of Forest (Conservation) Act, the tribals will definitely be benefited.

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, since such an incident occurred in my area, therefore, I had informed the hon'ble Minister about this. He can get the inquiry conducted. Due to this Act, development

work had suffered whereas no tree was cut as there was no tree. The case was filed against officials on this pretext. According to my information, in places where the responsibility of protecting forest was handed over to panchayat and people of the village, the forest is safe there but where the forest is under the control of officials of the Forest Department, the forest have been completely denuded. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether Government is taking any action for the protection of forest because these are the only source of employment for the poor?

MR. SPEAKER : You please ask supplementary question.

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : I want to know whether the Government wants to give responsibility of Forest Conservation to the people of the village or the panchayat or not?

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : I would like to tell the Hon'ble Member that if action has been taken against any officer without any reason, it should be brought to my notice. I will definitely take action on it. As he has said if somebody wants to develop any forest on the surrounding area of villages under Extension to Scheduled Area, 1996 then for that, government has some schemes. I do not want to repeat the names of those schemes. I would like to give assurance on behalf of the Central Government that under those scheme immediate action can be taken. In January, 1996, one Joint Forest Programme had been launched. Under that Programme and under another scheme, till today, two million hectares of degraded forest land had been regenerated. If Hon'ble Member wants to introduce any other scheme then Government will certainly consider it.

DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with a view to check the indiscriminate felling of trees and deteriorating conditions of environment, Forest Conservation Act, 1980 was enacted. According to this Act, it was compulsory to take permission from the Central Government before converting the reserved forest land for non-forest purposes. Hon'ble Minister has replied to this question so simply. I would like to quote two examples. The area from which I come is a tribal area. A dam named Masaan Dam had to be constructed there. A Hydro-power station was also to be constructed on that dam. The dam was to be used for irrigation purpose also, but the Forest Department stopped its work. Entire arrangement had been done and machinery was also moved to that place. This is one of the examples for which the hon'ble Minister has given a very brief reply. The Mineral resources are also available in forests. I want that forests should not be recklessly exploited but should be used judiciously. In my constituency, rig machine of ONGC was installed to explore oil. 16 trees were causing hindrance in its operation but Forest Department has not given its permission to cut those trees. Later on people cut those trees. ONGC was fined rupees one crore by the Forest Department.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : What is your supplementary? Please ask your supplementary, otherwise I will disallow you.

[Translation]

DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to tell the hon'ble Minister about it through this. Hon'ble Minister has given its reply in very brief. I would like to inform the hon'ble Minister about two points. ONGC was fined rupees one crore.

MR. SPEAKER : The Question does not relate to ONGC, it relates to the Forest Development.

DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am coming to the specific question only. Punishment has been awarded to the ONGC and the ONGC had undertaken to plant one crore trees. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the amount of fine has been realised from the ONGC and whether they have planted one crore trees?

[English]

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : Sir, this supplementary is totally out of the purview of the main question. So, I do not have the information about this right now and I do not know to which project the hon. Member is referring to. But in case there is any specific reference that the hon. Member would like to make about ONGC, I would like to assure the House, through you, that I would definitely look into the matter.

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY : Sir, in his reply, the hon. Minister has said that there are no hardships and no hampering of developmental activities. This is a very unfair answer. He may perhaps take some time to know all the problems being faced by his Ministry. I would like to bring to his notice that as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, it took me five years to get a sanction to construct a small path for the tribals to walk to their agricultural work place in spite of it having the sanction of the concerned State Government. This is only one example. Under this Act, what are the parameters to notify certain areas as the conservative-notified areas for certain activities? You may be aware of the fact that the SHAR Project has been located by ISRO in the East Coast. There is a bird sanctuary at a stone's throw distance and about 750 Kms. stretch of area has been notified as the protected area where no agricultural work, building or road activity can be undertaken.

MR. SPEAKER : This is a question relating to the developmental activity in tribal areas.

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY : Yes, I am talking about the developmental activity only. An activity like the Prawn culture has been stopped there and the Forest Department people are harassing the tribal people. Will the Minister like to review this Act? This Act

was brought by Shrimati Indra Gandhi. It is a very good Act and it is very much needed also. In view of the developmental activity in prohibited area, this Act must be reviewed now. It must be implemented on a realistic basis. What action does the Minister propose to take in this regard?

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : The Forest Conservation Act is a regulatory Act. It only regulates certain uses of forest land for non-forest purposes and it is implemented by the Centre. All forest land is under the ownership of the State Government. When a State Government proposes a project for the approval of the Central Government, we review it on the basis of certain parameters. The first parameter is, whether that particular project is serving the needs of the community of that area. If it serves, we grant them permission, provided an equivalent portion of the non forest land is given to the Centre for compensating afforestation on some other land. If for some or the other reason it is not possible for them to offer such a land, we ask them to give double of the degraded forest land, which we use for the purpose of forestation. The State Government has also to collect the money.

Suppose, there are certain projects which fall in the category of reserved forest area or in the periphery of the reserved forest area, the question which you have also asked, whether those projects will get permission or not. Bird sanctuary also come under reserved forest area. The hon. Supreme forest land under the dictionary meaning of the word, is to be treated as the forest land and all reserved forest areas cannot be used for non-forest purposes unless and until it as per stipulated by the conditions laid down by the hon. Supreme Court. Keeping all this in view, we have to review all the projects.

With regard to the question which you have asked as to whether there is any possibility of a review of such an Act, if you have any specific suggestion you can send it to the Government.

[Translation]

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Member in his reply has stated that if 2 acres of land is provided in lieu of one acre of Forest land, then the Project is cleared. I want to say that large scale tribal area exists in Maharashtra and since 1980 forests have also been protected on a large scale. I am nothing. This about the Forest area of Grahchiroli district of my Constituency 'Chandrapur'. I would like to say that 90 per cent of the proposals recommended by State Government are turned down by the Central Government. It is also wrong that clearance is being given by the Regional Office for proposals upto 5 acres of forest land. For Adivasis, particularly those who helped in conservation, facilities like school, stadium, water supply, public health centre, etc. are all pending I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether a meeting between the Forest Minister and M.Ps. of the concerned area will be called to clear the pending proposal of those areas?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please ask your question?

[Translation]

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, my second point is that there are large scale Judpi Forests in my constituency and this comes under the Revenue Department. The State Government offers this Judpi land in lieu of development projects but the Forest Minister of the Central Government does not accept the proposal. Lakhs of Acres of land exist in Judpi Jungle of Maharashtra. Will the proposal be accepted if the State Government offers Judpi forest land in double ratio in lieu of developmental projects?

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : As you have stated about Judpi forest land, I must say that any proposal from the State Government will definitely be considered. But as I stated earlier Forest Conservation Act is not yet applicable to any piece of land which was marked as forest land or which was used for the forest purpose before 25th October, 1980 when this Ordinance was brought. However, there is no difficulty in converting a land not marked as forest land for non forest purpose. However, a procedure has been laid down for the conversion of land which was defined as forest land before 1980. I had mentioned about that Procedure. Any proposal from the State Government will be examined by the Central Government in the light of Forest Conservation Act. A very good point was raised by the hon'ble Member in his first question when he asked whether there was any proposal to build a school for tribals.

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Hon'ble Minister, Sir, big dam projects have been started there on which as much as 10-15 crores of rupees have been spent but these projects have been left incomplete as the work thereon has been stopped.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Let the Minister complete his reply.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : I have said, Forest Conservation Act is a regulatory Act; it does not deny development. What it says is that if you want to use forest land for developmental projects, there is a stipulated procedure for that. That procedure has now been vindicated by the court. If there is a particular proposal which falls into this, I assure that it can definitely be taken note of.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Sir, the Forest Conservation Act of 1980 has come in for criticism in this House on many occasions. We have a very dynamic Minister in charge of this Department now. I put this question with the fervent hope that he would really study this issue.

I come from a constituency in which 300 tribal colonies are there. Attached to a tribal colony, you cannot even construct a small community hall because

that goes against the provisions of this law. The Minister has stated that there are two provisions—one is the compensatory afforestation and the other is upgradation of the forest. Kerala is a thickly populated State and hardly any land is available with the Government either for compensatory afforestation or for upgradation of forests. In that kind of a situation, the condition laid down in the Act has become unenforceable.

Sabarimalai is a pilgrimage place which 40 lakh devotees visit every year. When Kerala Government made a request for construction of toilets for providing primary facilities, the Government of India disallowed it. In my constituency, townships like Kattappana and Edumbalam which are going to be municipalities, now they are Panchayats...(Interruption)

MR. SPEAKER : Please ask your question. Time is very short.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : It is about tribal development, Sir. Kindly permit me. I am putting my question...(Interruption). The cutoff year of 1976 is not being implemented properly and fairly because the survey is defective. In view of this, will the hon. Minister take the initiative to conduct a fresh survey in coordination with the State Government; and will the Government of India identify the areas where forests are converted into townships and give pattas to the inhabitants in those areas?

Secondly, will the Government waive this condition and allow developmental activities in such places where compensatory afforestation or upgradation is not possible?

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : Sir, I can explain the position of the law as it exists today. According to the law that exists in the statute book, which is passed by the hon. House, the condition as stipulated for conversion of forest land for non-forest purposes is what I have mentioned. We can find out, if there are specific cases which can be solved within the parameters of the law. I welcome the hon. Members on this. We can have a meeting and discuss this issue pertaining to the State of Kerala.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Thank you.

[Translation]

Setting up of Regulatory Commissions

*66. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to set up Electricity Regulatory Commissions both at the Central and State levels;

(b) whether the views of the State Governments have been sought before setting up such commissions;

(c) whether almost all the SEBs have a large sum to pay to the Government;

(d) the extent to which the setting up of these panels will help improving the power position, regulatory transmission and enable the SEBs to pay their dues; and

(e) the steps the Union Government contemplate to take during 1998-99 in the direction of solving the problem of power shortage throughout the country?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Delhi Vidyut Board owes around Rs. 6,000 crores to Badarpur Thermal Power Station owned by Government of India. The outstanding dues of SEBs to Ministry of Railways as on 31.1.1998 were of the order of Rs. 1003 crores. In addition, SEBs owe around Rs. 17,000 crores to Central Power Sector Undertakings in power and coal sectors.

(d) As per the available information, the total effective subsidy to agricultural and domestic sectors is over Rs. 19,200 crores during 1996-97. Of this, the State Governments proposed to compensate only Rs. 2634 crores through budgetary subventions. This is only 12.7% of the effective subsidy that the SEBs had to bear at the given levels of tariffs for agricultural and domestic sectors. SEBs, recovered around Rs. 8035 crores through cross-subsidization. Thus the total net loss to the SEBs on account of low agricultural and domestic tariffs has been of the order of Rs. 8,500 crores. This is around 20% of the total revenue of electricity for power sale. The extent of the increase in the financial burden on SERs during the period from 1992-93 to 1996-97 can be seen from the fact that 1992-93 the losses on account of tariffs, after taking into account the accruals on account of budgetary subventions and cross-subsidization were only Rs. 2277 crores (i.e. around 10% of the total revenue from the power sale). The major impact of this has been:

(i) The net internal resources of SEBs needed to plan and undertake new investments have gone down from Rs. (-) 161.5 crores in 1992-93 to Rs. (-) 4482 crores in 1996-97.

(ii) High level of outstanding dues of SEBs to CPSUs has negative impact on the capacity of CPSUs to invest in capacity addition programmes. This compels CPSUs to depend upon costly borrowings from the domestic and international markets.

(iii) Poor financial health of SEBs does not permit the State Governments to extend adequate and commercially acceptable guarantees to private investors. It is assessed that

escrowable capacity of SEBs can support only around 10,000 MW capacity in the power sector. Thus despite receiving encouraging response from IPPs for investment in the power sector, the actual inflow has been below par.

The establishment of Regulatory Commissions would help in rationalising tariff and also provide for cross-subsidies, wherever required. The setting up of Regulatory commissions does not preclude the State Governments from extending subsidies to agriculture which is an important and crucial sector of the economy. The State Governments can exercise the option of providing subsidies over and above those recommended by Regulatory Commissions. Such subsidies could cover free power to agriculture, and/or to weaker sections on condition that the State Governments compensate the SEBs by providing adequate budgetary support. When tariffs are rationalized and budgetary support is provided, the SEBs will improve their financial health and their capacity to invest. This in turn will help in flow of greater resources, both public and private, into the power sector, thereby improving the power position considerably. This will go a long way in enabling the SEBs in investing on critical works such as renovation and modernisation of existing generation facilities, improvements of transmission and distribution systems etc. In the long run, this will have the effect of optimising operational performance, reducing the T&D losses and improving the quality of power supplies to the consumers.

(e) In order to improve the utilisation of existing capacity and to meet the projected increase in demand, Government is pursuing both short term and long term measures which include raising PLF of existing stations. Quick completion of on going schemes, renovation and modernisation of old plants, setting up of inter-regional transmission links, system improvement programme for the power utilities, building of new capacities and institutional reforms in the power sector.

[Translation]

SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister of Power whether the parliamentary Standing Committee of Ministry of Power has not accepted the recommendation made by the Central Government to set up Central Electricity Regulatory Commission instead of Central Electricity Authority and the panel headed by Shri Jag Mohan, Member of Parliament had on 8.7.97 criticised the setting up of a Parallel organisation and instead, suggested to make C.E.A. more efficient and strong?

[English]

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : The CRC, and the SCRC Ordinance which is now proposed to be brought for the as a Bill to be converted into an Act, deals with tariff, Now, tariff fixation under the Electricity

Act is a matter that is left to the Government. It is not one which deals with the Central Electricity Authority. The Central Electricity Authority is basically a technical body attached to the Ministry of Power. It deals with technical clearances. It deals with the advising on tariff fixation in a sense that when you talk of cost of a project; and from the cost of a project if the tariff notification applies, then it comes into operation. These are really the powers of the Central and State Governments, which have been given to a regulatory body.

With regard to the strengthening of the Central Electricity Authority, I can assure the hon. Member that we are taking steps. We are looking into the Committee. We believe that the CEA has much stronger role to play and it will play. We would be coming forth and I would be informing the hon. Member of the situation.....
(Interruptions)

SHRI MOTILAL VORA : This is not clear.

I am saying that the Standing Committee had totally rejected the proposal of forming this ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Now, you can ask the first supplementary.

SHRI MOTILAL VORA : This is my first supplementary.

I think, the hon. Minister has not understood my point. The point is that the Standing Committee had rejected the proposal of the formation of the CREC under the Chairmanship of Shri Jag Mohan, and the recommendations of the Standing Committee had been taken into consideration..... (Interruptions)

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : No. Sir,

SHRI MOTILAL VORA : What I want to know from the hon. Minister is whether he is ignoring the recommendations..... (Interruptions) Let me say.

MR. SPEAKER : Let him say first.

SHRI MOTILAL VORA : When a Standing Committee was constituted by Parliament, its recommendations have to be followed. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the recommendations of the Committee were taken into consideration.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : With regard to the Standing Committee recommendations, I wish to assure the hon. Member that on the recommendations of the Standing Committee, two Conferences of the Chief Ministers were held. In fact, the request of the Standing Committee was that the Chief Minister of the States should be consulted. The Common Minimum National Action Programme on Power was finalised on a consensus basis. It is on the basis of that document that the present Bill which has incorporated amendments suggested by them, has come in. It would have gone back to the Standing Committee if the House had not dissolved. Because of the dissolution of the House, the earlier Standing Committee could not get the Report of the Common Minimum National Action Programme on Power.

[Translation]

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister that as the Hon'ble Minister has stated in Para 'e' of his reply that reforms would be made to improve the utilization of existing capacity.

[English]

Modernisation of the existing units, improvement of the transmission and distribution systems, and the quality of power supply to the consumers.

[Translation]

Besides, agriculture and domestic use, power is being consumed by the industrial sector on a large scale in the country. The previous Government had allowed the big industries with turnover above Rs. 100 crore to install their own small power units. It had also announced to provide facilities for installing these units.

12.00 hrs.

However, according to my information these facilities are not being provided to the industrial units who want to set up captive power Projects. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister what type of facilities would be provided to the industries for setting up Captive Power Projects?

[English]

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, though it is beyond the scope of this question, since the hon. Member has asked the question seriously, I would like to respond to him. With regard to captive power projects. If the hon. Member has any specific instance and if he brings it to my notices, I shall definitely extend immediate personal attention and see that the problem is solved.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Pollution due to Power Projects

*64. SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

- whether the power projects spread pollution in the environment;
- if so, the details thereof; and
- the remedial steps taken by the Government to minimise the level of pollution due to such projects?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) to (c) Power projects can cause environmental pollution, the nature and extent of which depends on the type of fuel used and the power generation systems installed. Power projects based on coal emit suspended particulate matter,

sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen as the main pollutants. Combined cycle power plants using clean fuel such as gas/naphtha emit oxides of nitrogen.

The steps taken for minimising the levels of pollution from power plants include the following:

- Directions have been issued under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 to the power plants for complying with the prescribed pollution discharge standards by installing requisite pollution control systems.
- All thermal power plants having an investment of over Rs. 50 crores require an environmental clearance under which conditions prescribe environmental safeguards and pollution control systems including provision of green belt and utilisation of flyash over a prescribed time frame.
- Mandatory use of beneficiated coal with an ash content not exceeding 34 per cent has been stipulated with effect from 1st June, 2001 based on distance criteria.

[English]

Norms for Opening Post Offices

*65. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

- the existing norms for opening of Post offices in Rural, Urban, Tribal and Backward areas; and
- the status of implementation of suggestions made in Justice Talwar Committee Report regarding changing the existing norms?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) The norms for opening post offices in Urban, Rural, Tribal and backward areas are given in the Statement enclosed

(b) Justice Talwar Committee has not suggested any change in the existing norms for the opening of post offices.

Statement

Norms for opening of Post Offices (Last revised in 1991)

1. Norms for Opening of Extra-Departmental Branch post offices (EDBOs)

1.1 Population:

- In Normal Areas :

3000 population in a group of villages (including the PPO villages)

(b) *In the Hilly, Tribal, Desert and Inaccessible Areas:*

500 population in an individual village or 1000 population in a group of villages.

1.2. Distance:

(a) *In Normal Areas :*

The minimum distance from the nearest existing post office will be 3 kms.

(b) *In Hilly, Tribal, Desert and Inaccessible Areas :*

The distance limit will be the same as above except that in Hilly Areas, the minimum distance limit can be relaxed by the Directorate in cases where such relaxation is warranted by special circumstances which should be clearly explained while submitting a proposal.

1.3. Anticipated income :

(a) *In Normal Areas :*

The minimum anticipated revenue will be 33- $\frac{1}{3}$ % of cost.

(b) *In Hilly, Tribal, Desert and Inaccessible Areas :*

The minimum anticipated income will be 15% of the cost.

Note : It is to be ensured while sanctioning a new Branch Post office that the population to be served by the parent Branch post office does not fall below the minimum prescribed in the criteria. Similarly, the loss of the parent office should continue to be within permissible limits.

2. Norms for Upgrading/Opening of New Departmental Sub Post offices :

2.1. In Rural areas :

The minimum of work load of the Extra Departmental Branch Post Office should be five hours per day. The permissible annual loss should be not more than Rs. 2400/- in normal areas and Rs. 4800/- in Tribal and Hilly areas.

2.2. In Urban Areas :

2.2.1. In urban areas, the post office should be initially self supporting and at the time of the first annual review, it should show 5% profit to be eligible for further retention.

2.2.2. The distance between two post offices should not be less than 1.5 Km. in cities with a population of 20 lakhs and above, and 2 Kms. in other urban areas. If it is a Delivery Post Office, the distance from the nearest Delivery Post office should not be less than 5 kms.

2.2.3. Heads of Circles have powers to relax the distance condition in 10% of the cases.

2.2.4. A Delivery Post Office in Urban Area should have a minimum of 7 Postmen's beats.

[Translation]

Participation of Private Sector in Road Construction

*67. SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHARY :

SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have firmed up any policy for the participation of private sector in road-construction activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The policy has following salient features :—

(i) Road Sector has been declared as an industry.

(ii) Procedure for land acquisition/environmental clearances has been simplified.

(iii) Detailed guidelines for BOT project issued.

(iv) National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), an autonomous body operationalised and authorised to take up BOT projects. NHAI can participate in such projects by contributing upto 30% of the equity.

(v) Capital subsidy by Government/NHAI upto 40% of the project can be provide for improving financial viability of the project on case to case basis.

(vi) Treating highway and housing and other development activities forming integral part of highway project as a part of road infrastructure.

(vii) Duty free import of sophisticated equipment for highway projects.

(viii) Corporate tax exemption of 100% in the first 5 years and 30% concession in the next 5 years to be availed of in 20 years.

(ix) Automatic approval for foreign equity upto 74% and upto 100% on case to case basis allowed.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Pollution in Delhi

*68. SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA :
DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether despite all the steps taken by the Government and other agencies in pursuance of the Supreme Court directions for pollution control in the capital, the pollution level in Delhi has assumed serious proportions;

(b) whether a special pollution control authority has been set up in Delhi;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken for pollution control in the National Capital Region?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) and (b) Pollution levels show a rising trend in Delhi mainly due to growth in economic activity and increase in the number of vehicles. An action plan for controlling pollution in Delhi has been prepared by the Ministry of Environment and Forests. The Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority has been set up under the Environment (Protection) Act for protecting and improving the quality of the environment and preventing, controlling and abating environmental pollution in the National Capital Region. The Authority will monitor the implementation of the Action Plan.

(c) and (d) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement

**The Environment Pollution
(Prevention and Control) Authority**

The Central Government has constituted an authority known as the Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority for the National Capital Region.

The members of the Authority are :

- | | | |
|-----|--|----------|
| (1) | Shri Bhure Lal
Secretary
Central Vigilance Commission
New Delhi | Chairman |
| (2) | Smt. Kiran Dhingra
Secretary
Government of the National
Capital Territory of Delhi
Delhi | Member |

(3)	Shri Anil Aggrawal Director Centre for Science and Environment New Delhi	Member
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(4)	Shri Jagdish Khattar Representative of the Automobile Manufacturers Association of India Executive Director Maruti Udyog Limited New Delhi	Member
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(5)	Shri D.K. Biswas Chairman Central Pollution Control Board New Delhi	Convener
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The Authority shall exercise the following powers and functions:

1. Issue directions for the purpose of protecting the environment, in respect of complaints pertaining to :

- (i) standards for the quality of the environment in its various aspects,
- (ii) standards for emission or discharge of environmental pollutants from various sources,
- (iii) restriction of areas in which any industries, operations or processes or class of industries or processes shall not be carried out or shall be carried out subject to certain safeguards,
- (iv) procedures and safeguards for the prevention of accidents which may cause environmental pollution and remedial measures for such accidents,
- (v) procedures and safeguards for the handling of hazardous substances.

2. For controlling vehicular pollution, take all necessary steps to ensure compliance of specified emission standards by vehicles including proper calibration of the equipment for testing vehicular pollution, ensuring compliance of fuel quality standards, monitoring and coordinating action for traffic planning and management.

3. Ensure maintenance of specified ambient noise standards, and have the power to issue directions under the Environment (Protection) Act, including banning or restricting any industry, process or operation emitting noise.

4. Monitor the progress of the action plan drawn up by the Ministry of Environment and Forests on pollution in Delhi as contained in the "White Paper on Pollution in Delhi with an Action Plan".

The Steps being taken for pollution control in the National Capital Region are :

- (i) The Environment Pollution (Prevention and Control) Authority has been set up for the

National Capital Region for protecting and improving the quality of the environment and preventing, controlling and abating environmental pollution.

- (ii) An Action Plan for the control of Pollution in the National Capital Region has been prepared.
- (iii) Monitoring of air quality by the Central Pollution Control Board through 10 ambient air quality monitoring stations under the National Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Program. The data generated forms the basis for the analysis of the quality of air in the different regions against the prescribed limits.
- (iv) Effluent and emission standards for major sectors of air and water polluting industries have been notified. Industries have been directed to comply with the prescribed standards.
- (v) Emission norms have been progressively tightened for emissions from vehicles at the manufacturing stage. These came into effect on 9.1.1990 with a tighter standard introduced on 1.4.1996. A much stricter emission norm will be introduced from 1.4.2000 for all categories of petrol and diesel vehicles.
- (vi) The Government has drawn up a major program for improvement of the quality of automotive fuels. Unleaded petrol was introduced in Delhi from 1.4.1995 for the use of new 4 wheeler petrol vehicles fitted with catalytic converters introduced from this date. Low sulphur diesel of 0.25% has been introduced in Delhi from 15th August 1997. Pre-mixed fuel oil mixture is being supplied in the retail fuel outlets to prevent sale of loose low quality oils.
- (vii) Introduction of cleaner fuels such as CNG, propane and LPG in in-use vehicles in order to reduce emissions.
- (viii) The public transport system is proposed to be strengthened by inducting 1500 buses of urban design into the DTC fleet.
- (ix) More than 200 private petrol pumps and workshops have been authorised by the Department of Transport, Government of Delhi for pollution checking, tuning of polluting vehicles and issuance of Pollution Under Control Certificates. Pollution checking facilities are being increased.
- (x) The Transport Department has launched public awareness campaigns in Delhi to educate people about the statutory punitive provisions related to vehicular pollution, health hazards, and on the maintenance

measures for control of pollution from vehicles.

- (ix) A system of synchronised signals, and better traffic management of most polluted intersections has been introduced.
- (xii) A number of pollution industries located in non-conforming areas in Delhi have been closed or relocated to conforming areas
- (xiii) A scheme for setting up of common effluent treatment plants in different industrial areas and estates for treating effluents from clusters of small-scale industrial units in Delhi has been taken up.
- (xiv) Cleaning up of the river Yamuna has been taken up under the second phase of the Ganga Action Plan.
- (xv) Electrostatic precipitators have been installed in three thermal power plants in Delhi, at Indraprastha, Rajghat and Badarpur, to prevent the release of suspended particulate matter into the atmosphere. Sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen are emitted through stacks of specified height to facilitate wider dispersal so that the ground level concentrations of these gaseous pollutants are kept controlled. Stack monitoring is done on a regular basis.

Poaching of Rare/Endangered Species

*69. Dr. ASIM BALA :

SHRI ANNASAHAB M.K. PATIL :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether poaching of Tiger and rare species of animals and birds continues to increase unabatedly taking a heavy toll of the animals and birds of rare species while the Government's attempt of checking the poaching is proving to be futile;

(b) if so, the details of poaching in identified pockets of the country, State-wise;

(c) fresh initiatives under consideration of the Union authorities in co-ordination with State Governments to deal with poaching menace more effectively during 1998-99 and Ninth Plan period;

(d) whether Government propose to introduce a comprehensive law for the protection of different endangered species of flora and fauna;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the manner in which this law will benefit our country from the commercial point of view?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, sporadic cases of poaching of wild

animals and birds are reported from different parts of the country.

(c) to (f) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(c) Analogous to the Centre, the States have also been asked to set up coordination committees of all enforcement agencies so that there is effective cooperation to check poaching and control illegal trade. Staff in National Parks and Sanctuaries are being provided modern arms, wireless equipment, and communication facilities. The Planning Commission is also being pursued to revive the Centrally sponsored scheme in the IX plan for control of poaching and illegal trade, which was earlier transferred to the State Sector in 1992-93. This will enable the Central Government to effectively support the States in their efforts to control poaching and illegal trade in wildlife.

(d) to (f) The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 as amended in 1991 is a comprehensive legislation which empowers the State Governments/UTs to have better control over the management of wildlife and protection of the endangered species of flora and fauna. The amended Act is a step further towards providing greater protection to wildlife, and has enhanced the punishment for violations. The law also covers commercial trade.

Pollution on Sea Beaches

*70. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the increasing pollution on the sea beaches in the country; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to check the same?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government have issued the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) Notification, 1991 which lays down stipulations to regulate development activities in coastal areas. Separately standards have been notified for disposal of effluents from land based activities which are being implemented through both the State Pollution Control Boards and the Central Pollution Control Board.

[Translation]

Influences of Media Violence on Children

*71. SHRI CHINTA MOHAN :
SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Media Violence

influence kids" appearing in the 'Pioneer', dated March 23, 1998;

(b) whether the Government are aware that the programmes telecast by Doordarshan have adverse effect on people specially on the children;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to evolve a national policy on Television or any legislation for the electronic media including Cable T.V. to check the growing display of violence, crime and obscenity; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. The news report refers to UNESCO inter cultural study, which was not India-specific, but was global, covering a sample of 5000 pupils in 23 different countries, including India also.

(c) and (d) As of now, Prasar Bharati (Doordarshan) previews all its programmes before they are telecast to ensure that they do not contain any excessive violence or vulgarity which may have adverse effect on the viewers. The preview also ensures that programmes are in accordance with the Programme Code and Advertisement Code. The Government have initiated steps for introducing an Amendment Bill for restoring the provisions of the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990, which, *inter alia*, envisages establishment of a Broadcasting Council to monitor all programmes telecast on Doordarshan. The Cable Networks are governed by the provisions of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994. Sections 5 and 6 of the Act require that the programmes/ advertisements carried on channels which can be received only with the help of specialised gadgets/ decoders, adhere to the prescribed Programme/ Advertisement Codes.

[English]

Functioning of Government Run Schools

*72. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any critical study has been made by the Government on the functioning of Government run schools in urban areas with regard to management, facilities available to the students, teacher-student relationship and causes of drop outs;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the remedial measures being contemplated by the Government for the proper functioning of such Schools?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) Government have not conducted any such study specifically. However, country-wide data collected during the Sixth All India Educational Survey have broadly indicated the existing infrastructural deficiencies at various levels of educational institutions. The details

are given in the enclosed Statement. These have been circulated so that the required remedial measures can be taken. Specific actions would also be considered in discussions with the State Governments in the meeting of the Central Advisory Board on Education (CABE) which is a deliberative body comprising of Education Ministers of all States/UTs and prominent educationists.

Statement
Percentage of Schools having Physical facilities in Urban Areas

Categories of Schools	Management	Drinking Water	Urinals	Lavatories	Pacca Bldg.
1	2	3	4	5	6
Primary	Govt.	46.87	37.69	24.51	65.16
	Local Body	61.51	48.77	37.19	70.72
	Pvt. Aided	81.89	75.55	60.59	66.48
	Pvt. Unaided	95.68	92.81	84.61	84.79
Upper Primary	Govt.	65.17	58.59	46.60	70.63
	Local Body	81.31	72.97	59.49	84.71
	Pvt. Aided	90.76	88.59	75.58	72.58
	Pvt. Unaided	96.65	95.54	89.35	87.56
Secondary	Govt.	85.27	83.80	73.61	72.59
	Local Body	89.98	85.66	77.52	80.72
	Pvt. Aided	96.50	96.17	89.47	84.31
	Pvt. Unaided	97.14	96.59	91.12	86.70
Higher Secondary	Govt.	93.89	94.21	86.53	84.56
	Local Body	97.19	96.79	92.59	90.98
	Pvt. Aided	98.56	98.23	95.68	92.71
	Pvt. Unaided	98.25	98.30	94.94	88.78

Sources : Sixth All India Educational Survey, National Tables Volume II, Schools and Physical Facilities.

Electoral Reforms

*73. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :
SHRI A.C. JOS

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to bring any legislation to bring reforms in the electoral laws;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of proposals and suggestions made to the Government in this regard; and

(d) the steps taken to consider all the pending proposals before introduction of Bill regarding reforms in the electoral law?

THE MINISTER OF LAW JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) to (d) : A set of 24 proposals on electoral reforms was identified by the Government for discussions with leaders of various political parties. The gist of these proposals is given in the enclosed Statement. The first 17 of these 24 proposals were discussed in the meeting held on 22.05.1998 with leaders of various political parties. In the meeting of political parties, a 7-Member Committee headed by Shri Indrajit Gupta, Member of Parliament, was constituted to suggest concrete measures for State funding of candidates belonging to recognised political parties and other related issues. The Committee is to give its report by the end of August 1998. The recommendations of the Committee and the remaining

proposals would thereafter be discussed with political parties and the Government would consider introducing a Bill to give effect to such proposals on which consensus emerges amongst political parties.

Statement

Gist of Additional Proposals on Electoral Reforms

A. Candidates

1. Lowering the age of candidates contesting elections to the Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha from 25 years to 21 years and in case of elections to the Legislative Councils and Council of States from 30 years to 25 years.
2. Restriction on contesting election from more than one constituency.
3. Automatic disqualification of a person found guilty of corrupt practice.
4. Enhancement of required minimum number of valid votes polled to save security deposit from "one-sixth" to "one-fourth".

B. Political Parties

5. Compulsory maintenance of accounts by political parties and audit thereof by agencies specified by the Election Commission.
6. Ban on donations by companies to political parties.
7. Registration and De-registration of political parties—strengthening of existing provisions.
8. Regulating reservation and allotment of election symbols by a law of Parliament.

C. Rotation of Seats

9. Rotation of seats reserved for Scheduled Castes candidates.
10. Rotation of general seats in certain North Eastern States where majority of seats are reserved for Scheduled Tribes.

D. Election Expenses

11. The expenditure incurred by a political party etc., to be included in the election expenses of a candidate for purposes of ceiling on election expenses.
12. Empowering Election Commission to fix ceiling on election expenses before every general election.

E. State Funding

13. State Funding of elections - extent and manner thereof.

F. Electoral System

14. Change of present electoral system to

Majoritarian system/List system/Mixed system/any other system.

15. Making voting compulsory.

G. Model Code of Conduct

16. Statutory backing to provisions of Part- VII of the Model Code of Conduct.

H. Anti-Defection Law

17. Amendment to Anti-Defection Law.

I. Enhancement of Power of Election Commission

18. Empowering Election Commission to countermand an election on report from any Election Observer in addition to Returning Officer.
19. Empowering Election Commission to issue instructions and to make recommendations in connection with elections.

J. Election Commission and its Machinery

20. Mobilisation of employees of Public Sector Undertakings, autonomous bodies, statutory and non-statutory bodies aided by the Government etc., for election duties as also to provide that employees of such bodies including local authorities could also be deployed for election duties outside their State.
21. Mode of appointment of Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners.
22. The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners to be made ineligible for further appointment under the Government.
- 23.(i) Independent Secretariat for Election Commission of India on the lines of Lok Sabha Secretariat; and
(ii) Whether the expenses of the Election Commission should be "charged" on Consolidated Fund of India.
24. Chief Electoral Officer of every State exclusively for election work.

Development of Western Ghats

*74. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state

(a) the details of Overseas Development Agency (ODA) funds received for the development of Western Ghats during the last five year;

(b) the details of ODA funds utilised by the Government, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government have evolved any policy for the people's participation in this programme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof including details of developmental activities undertaken under this programme and the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) and (b) Western Ghats Forestry and Environmental project is under implementation in Karnataka to maintain the ecological balance in Western Ghats and to rehabilitate the Western Ghats Forests. This project is under implementation since 1992-1993 with the assistance of Overseas Development Agency.

ODA, United Kingdom. The details of funds utilised under the project for the last five years are as under :

Years	Rs in lakhs
1993-94	1027.645
1994-95	1300.507
1995-96	1492.378
1996-97	1590.216
1997-98	1856.995
Total	7267.741

(c) and (d) The major thrust area under the project is people's participation in the planning and management of forests. The State Government of Karnataka in 1993 has issued a Government order for involving local people in the management of forests through constitution of village forest committees. This was further revised in 1996 to facilitate involvement of villagers including women in the activities of village forest committees. The implementation of this project has resulted in afforestation of 40,312 ha and 424 Village Forest Committees have been constituted from the date of inception to end of March 1998.

Computer Education

*75. **SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE :** Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce computer as a major educational tool;

(b) if so, whether the Government have made any prospective plan to integrate computer literacy with the present educational system; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) A programme of Computer Literacy has already been introduced on a wide scale in the States and Union Territories as well as autonomous bodies, like Kendriya Vidyalaya, etc. The Government recognises the need to develop computers as a major educational tool in the wake of the remarkable developments in the fields of Information and Communication Technology.

(b) and (c) Several steps have already been initiated to popularise computer education at the secondary and senior school levels. Computer Science has been introduced as one of the electives in the academic stream at the senior school level. Another elective subject at this level is "Information Practices". Similarly under the vocational stream a Vocational Information Technology Course has been introduced. In addition, provision has been made for computer literacy at class IX and X levels as an optional component of work experience.

[Translation]

Mid-Day Meal Scheme

*76. **SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT :**
DR. T. SUBBARAMI RADDY :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the present status of the mid-day meal scheme for school children being run in the country;

(b) the names of the States which were provided food-grains under this scheme by the Union Government during 1994-95 to 1997-98 alongwith quantity thereof;

(c) the total amount spent by Centre on this scheme during 1997-98;

(d) whether the Government have made any assessment in regard to the implementation of this scheme;

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

(f) whether the Government propose to give greater thrust to this scheme; and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) The National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education popularly known as Mid-Day Meals scheme was launched on 15th August, 1995 and has been expanded to cover all States and Union Territories over a period of three years. 9.80 crore children in 6.88 lakh schools in 5,763 Blocks and urban areas are to be covered by the scheme during 1998-99.

The quantity of foodgrains allotted to all States and UTs under the scheme since its inception is as follows:

Year	Quantity (In MTs)
1995-96	7.13 lakh
1996-97	15.86 lakh
1997-98	25.68 lakh

(c) An amount of Rs. 1070.38 crore was spent by the Central Government on this scheme during 1997-98.

(d) and (e) As the programme has been extended to all blocks and urban areas in the country only in the year 1997-98, it has not been possible to conduct any formal review or evaluation of the scheme so far.

(f) and (g) According to present indications, the scheme is expected to continue during the Ninth Plan.

[English]

National Environment Fund

*77. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to set up a National Environmental Fund for developing forests with the help of global agencies like the UNDP;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have received financial assistance from International Institution Agencies/Organisations during the last five years for setting up National Parks/sanctuaries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, including the position of utilisation of funds and the deficiencies observed in the implementation of the programme as per the guidelines by the State Governments and action taken/proposed for mid course correction?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Do not arise.

(c) and (d) No financial assistance has been received from any international agency for setting up of National Parks/sanctuaries. However, a project titled "India Eco Development Project" funded by IDA/GEF is under implementation and it aims for bio-diversity conservation through eco development in Seven National Parks/Tiger Reserves. The project is in its initial stages of implementation with an outlay of Rs. 294.93 crores over a period of five years. The project has provisions for mid-term evaluation to rectify the deficiencies, if any, observed during the implementation of the programme.

Compensation to Students

*78. SHRI C.P.M. GIRIYAPPA :
SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Question Papers set up for the Class X and XII examinations conducted by C.B.S.E. in 1998 were out of syllabus and too lengthy;

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

(c) whether the Government propose to compensate the students on this count; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) As per information received from the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), the Question Papers set in Class X and Class XII examinations held in 1998 were within the scope of the syllabus and pattern prescribed by the Board.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Conversion of State Highways into National Highways

*79. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN :
SHRI SITA RAM YADAV :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received any requests from various States regarding the declaration of New National Highways and are considering to convert some State Highways into National Highways during the current year as well as Ninth Five Year Plan period;

(b) if so, the State-wise details thereof alongwith the names and stretches of each State Highway likely to be converted into National Highway during the said period; and

(c) the time by which these are likely to be declared as National Highways?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) Yes, Sir. Proposals for declaration of new National Highways from various State Governments have been received and during the year 1997-98, Government has already declared 18 new National Highways aggregating to a length of 4219 Kms in different States details of which have been given in the statement enclosed.

(b) and (c) As the 9th Plan is yet to be finalised and the resource position is not known, it is not possible to

indicate any time frame for further declaration of new National Highways.

Statement

S.No. in the schedule to the National Highways Act, 1956.	National Highway No. state through which passes and approx. length in Kms.	Description of National Highways
1	2	3
13-J	NH No. 57 (Bihar - 310)	The highway starting from its junction at Muzaffarpur on NH No. 28 connecting Darbhanga-Thaebkita-Forbesganj-Purnea to terminate at Purnea on NH No. 31 in Bihar.
67	NH No. 58 (U.P. - 527)	The highway starting from its junction with NH-24 in Km 17.65 near Ghaziabad and passing through Meerut, Muzzaffar Nagar, Roorkee, Haridwar, Rishikesh, Rudra Prayag, Chamoli, Joshimath, Badrinath and terminating at Mana in Uttar Pradesh.
68	59 (M.P. - 139) Gujarat - 211)	The highway starting from its junction on NH No.8 on Ahmedabad Bypass Connecting Balasionor Sevalhya Godhra-Limkheda-Dohad in Gujarat-Jhabua-Sardarpura-Dhar-Junction with Indore-Ratlam road near Ghat Bilod to terminate at Indore on NH No. 3 in Madhya Pradesh.
69	60 (Orissa - 57) (West Bengal - 68)	The highway starting from Balasore on NH No. 5 connecting Rupas-Jaleswar in Orissa-Dantan-Belda-Kasba Narayangarh and terminating at Kharagpur on NH No. 6 in West Bengal.
47.	NH No. 61 (Nagaland-220 Assam - 20 240)	The highway starting from its junction near Kohima on NH No. 39 in Nagaland and connecting Wokha-Mokokchung Amguri and terminating at its junction with NH No. 37 near Jhanji in Assam.
42-A	Extension of NH 52 A (Arunachal Pradesh-22 Assam - 10 32)	The highway starting from its junction near Itanagar on NH No. 52 A in Arunachal Pradesh and terminating at its junction with NH No. 52 near Gohpur in Assam
48	NH 52-B (Assam-31)	The highway starting from its junction on NH 52 near Kuljan and terminating at its junction with NH 37 in Assam.
33-B	Extension of NH 44 (Tripura - 135)	The highway starting from its junction near Agartala on NH 44 and terminating at Sabroom in Tripura.
49	NH No. 62 (Assam - 5) Meghalaya-125 130	The highway starting from its junction on NH 37 near Damra in Assam and terminating at Baghmara in Meghalaya.
13 GG.	NH.No. 17-B (Goa-40)	The highway starting from its junction with NH 4 A near Panda connecting Barim-Verna and terminating near Vasco in Goa.
50.	NH.NO. 63 (Karnataka - 370 Andhra Pradesh-62 432)	The highway starting from its junction with NH No. 17 near Ankola in Karnataka and connecting Hubli-Hospet and terminating at its junction with NH No. 7 near Gooty in Andhra Pradesh.
51.	NH No. 64 (Punjab - 225)	The highway starting from its junction on NH No. 22 near Chandigarh and connecting Rajpura-Patlala-Sangrur and terminating at its junction with NH No. 15 Near Bhatinda in Punjab.

1	2	3
52.	NH No. 65 (Haryana-240 Rajasthan-170 <u>410</u>)	The highway starting from its junction with NH No. 1 near Ambala in Haryana and connecting Kaithal-Hissar and terminating at its junction with NH No. 11 near Fatehpur in Rajasthan.
53	NH No.66 (Pondicherry-10 Tamil Nadu - 234 <u>244</u>)	The highway starting from its Junction with NH-45A in Pondicherry & connecting Tindivanam-Gingee-Thiruvan-namalai and terminating at its junction with NH No. 7 near Krishnagiri in Tamil Nadu.
54	NH No. 67 (Tamil Nadu-217)	The highway starting from Nagapattinam and connecting Trichy and terminating at its junction on NH No. 7 near Karur in Tamil Nadu
55	NH No. 68 (Tamil Nadu-134)	The highway starting from its junction on NH No. 45 near Ulundurpet and terminating at its junction with NH No. 7 near Salem in Tamil Nadu.
56	NH No. 69 (Maharashtra - 55 Madhya Pradesh-295 <u>350</u>)	The highway starting from its junction with NH No. 6 near Nagpur in Maharashtra and terminating at its junction with NH No. 12 near Obaidullaganj in Madhya Pradesh.
7-A	Extension of NH No. 6 (Maharashtra -127 Gujarat-160 <u>287</u>)	The highway starting from its junction with NH No. 6 near Dhule in Maharashtra and terminating at Surat in Gujarat.
Total 4219		

[English]

National Culture Fund

*80. SHRI S.S. OWAISI
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have set up a National culture fund to preserve and promote Indian culture;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have asked industries to contribute to this fund;

(d) if so, the number of industries who contributed to this fund;

(e) whether Government have failed to provide fund of their share; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor and efforts made by the Government to increase National Culture Fund?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) The Government of India have set up a National Culture Fund (NCF) in terms of a Notification published

in the Gazette of India Extraordinary dated 28.11.96. Copies of the Notification are already available in the Parliament Library.

(c) The NCF may accept contributions from statutory bodies created under the Acts of Parliament or of State Legislatures, the United Nations and its associated bodies, other international organisations, private and public corporate sectors both in India and abroad, international charitable/philanthropic organisations, non-resident Indians, trusts, societies and individuals.

(d) The Oberoi Group of Hotels and the National Mineral Development Corp. Ltd. have contributed Rs. 5,00,000/- and Rs. 25,000/- respectively to the National Culture Fund.

(e) and (f) No Sir. The Government has released Rs. 4 crores to the NCF as per the budgetary provisions.

Anomalies in Pay Scales of Primary Teachers

643. SHRI JAYSINHJI CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there are some anomalies in the pay scales of primary school teachers as recommended by the Fifth Pay Commission;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these recommendations have created a wide gap between the pay scales of primary teachers and TGTs;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Government propose to remove these anomalies;

(f) if so, the details of the steps taken in this regard; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) No. Sir.

(c) and (d) No. Sir.

(e) to (g) Do not arise. However, if the teachers perceive the revised pay structure as anomalous, they can take it up with the National Anomaly Committee set up by the Government for this purpose through National Council of Joint Consultative Machinery (NCJCM) (Staff Side), as per the prescribed procedure.

[Translation]

Installation of Telephones

644. SHRI BHASKARRAO PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether even after the issue of O.B. Number telephones are neither installed nor shifted for several months;

(b) if so, the action the Government propose to take in the matter against the officials responsible for the delay; and

(c) the time by which the pending telephones are likely to be installed/shifted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Sir, Telephones are installed/shifted as per prescribed norms of DOT after the issue

of OB Numbers, except in some cases due to the area being technically not feasible.

(b) Delay in execution of OB's is mainly due to technical reasons, so the question of taking action against the officials does not arise.

(c) All out efforts are being made to provide/shift the telephones where OBs have been issued, as soon as the cases become technically feasible by laying under Ground cables and upgrading external plant.

[English]

Opening of Rural Telephone Exchanges in Orissa

645. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to states :

(a) whether the Government have received any representation for opening of Telephone Exchanges in Rural Areas of Orissa circle along with the telephone exchanges in Urban areas;

(b) if so, the names of the places identified for opening up of Rural Telephone Exchanges in Koraput TDM areas and opened so far;

(c) whether any scheme, for expansion of telephone exchanges in the State are under consideration of the Government; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes Sir, 15 nos. of representations have been received for opening telephone exchanges in the rural areas of Orissa for the year 1998-99. No representations have been received for urban areas.

(b) In Koraput TDM area representations have been received for opening of rural telephone exchanges at Gumuda Maidapur, Onkadelli and Podagada. None of these exchanges has been opened so far.

(c) Yes, Sir,

(d) The details are given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Expansion Plans for Orissa Circle

	Existing as on 31.03.98		Proposed expansion/New exchanges			Proposed DEL
	Capacity	DEL	Gross Capacity	Replacement	Net Capacity	
Large Exchange	164980	138811	89500	22500 9000 L to be scrapped	58000	46500
Small & Medium Exchange	138626	127287	30000	5000	25000	13500
Total	303606	266098	119500	36500	83000	60000

LPTs/VLPTs in Kerala

646. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Low Power Transmitter was sanctioned at Pala and Very Low Power Transmitter (VLPT) were sanctioned in Erattupeta and Mundakkayam in Kottayam District of Kerala; and

(b) if so, the present stage of the Projects and steps taken to implement these projects?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI. SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The sites for setting up of Low Power TV Transmitter (LPT) at Pala and the Very Low Power TV Transmitter (VLPT) at Erattupeta are being identified and completion of these LPT/VLPT project will take about one to two years time subject to availability of resources, and other infrastructural facilities.

Development of Ports

647 SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the proposal of the Kerala Government regarding the development of Azhikkal/Beypore/ Vizhinham ports is pending with the Union Government for the Central assistance on the recommendation of the working group constituted by the Ministry in 1992; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) and (b) The proposal received from Kerala Government was incomplete and therefore could not be considered for Central assistance.

Licence Fees for Basic and Cellular Services

648. SHRI K.P. NAIDU : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the licence fee quoted for basic and Cellular services are unrealistic and higher; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to reduce it to allow the projects to take off?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) The bidders for both Basic and Cellular services themselves quoted the licence fee for

various Telecom Circles in a competitive bidding process, after assessing the demand for these services.

(b) The operator's Associations have represented about the poor health of both Cellular and Basic service industry and have requested for certain financial reliefs. Bureau of Industrial Cost & Prices (BICP) has been requested to carry out a techno-economic study of cellular service industry. Their report is awaited.

[Translation]

Licences to IITL Mumbai

649. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Videsh Sanchar Nigam Limited (V.S.N.L) has paid Rs. 50 crore to the Iridium India Telecom Limited (IITL) located at Mumbai in the last October but the Department of Telecommunications has not issued licences to the IITL so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for making payment in advance for the procurement of equipments;

(d) whether the matter has been inquired and the officials responsible for adopting lackadaisical approach in the matter have been identified and the punishment awarded to them for the same; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) VSNL has made a secured advance payment of Rs. 50 crores to Iridium India Telecom Ltd. for purchase of the gateway equipment after obtaining approval from VSNL Board and after entering into MOU with IITL.

(c) to (e) The matter is being looked into. It is not possible to comment at this stage.

[English]

Funds Release for National Highways

650. DR. JAYANTA RONGPI: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the amount released to different States for National Highways during last three years;

(b) the amount utilised by various States during the corresponding period;

(c) the amount demanded by the Government of Assam for National Highways of the States for the current year; and

(d) the time by which the work of National Highway No. 36 between Doboka and Dimapur could be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) The amount released to different States for National Highways during last three years is given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) No funds have been surrendered by any of the States during these years.

(c) An Amount of Rs. 28.45 crore has been demanded by the Assam Government for the current year.

(d) The works on NH. 36 between Doboka and Dimapur are likely to be completed by March, 1999.

Statement

Funds Released for National Highways

(Rs. in lakhs)

No.	State/U.Ts	1995-96 Allotment	1996-97 Allotment	1997-98 Allotment
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2100.00	2100.00	2949.83
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00
3.	Assam	1650.00	1212.00	1821.00
4.	Bihar	1600.00	1400.00	1900.00
5.	Chandigarh	25.00	24.00	30.00
6.	Delhi	400.00	400.00	800.00
7.	Goa	500.00	700.00	900.00
8.	Gujarat	3398.00	2933.00	3675.00
9.	Haryana	1000.00	800.00	1100.00
10.	Himachal Pradesh	1600.00	1200.00	1700.00
11.	Jammu and Kashmir	50.00	100.00	150.00
12.	Karnataka	1400.00	1900.00	2900.00
13.	Kerala	2100.00	2500.00	3600.00
14.	Madhya Pradesh	2000.00	1000.00	1700.00
15.	Maharashtra	2859.00	1900.00	2900.00
16.	Manipur	500.00	360.00	700.00
17.	Meghalaya	600.00	900.00	920.00
18.	Nagaland	50.00	10.00	100.00
19.	Orissa	1300.00	1750.00	2600.00
20.	Pondicherry	50.00	10.00	70.00
21.	Punjab	1000.00	1200.00	1300.00
22.	Rajasthan	2400.00	1850.00	2550.00
23.	Tamil Nadu	1000.00	1905.00	2500.00
24.	Uttar Pradesh	3400.00	3000.00	4608.00
25.	West Bengal	2200.00	3573.00	5375.00
		33182.00	32767.00	46848.00

Demand and Supply of Power in N.E. States

651. SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the gap between demand and supply of power in the N.E. States continues to exist;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the steps taken so far to bridge this gap; and

(d) the extent to which these steps improved the power situation in these States?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) and (b) State-wise power supply position in the North-Eastern States during 1997-98 is given below:

(Figures in MU net)

Name of the State	Require-ment	Availa-bility	Shortage	%
Arunachal Pradesh	144.30	115.30	29.00	20.1
Assam	2987.30	2727.50	259.80	8.7
Manipur	511.60	404.70	106.90	20.9
Meghalaya	413.00	425.80	(+) 12.80	(+) 3.10
Mizoram	214.90	153.20	61.70	28.70
Nagaland	213.90	159.50	54.40	25.40
Tripura	511.30	439.00	72.32	14.10
Total (N.E.R.)	4996.30	4425.00	571.30	11.40

(c) Various measures taken to improve the availability of power in North-Eastern States include— (i) coordinated and optimal utilisation of existing generating capacity; (ii) promotion of bilateral exchange between surplus States and deficit States of the region; (iii) allocation of 100 MW power to Assam from the unallocated output of NTPC stations located in the neighbouring Eastern region. Three units of 21 MW each have been commissioned at Agartala Gas Power Station of NEEPCO which helped in reducing the gap between demand and supply.

Besides above, the various executing agencies are taking necessary steps for expeditious completion of ongoing generation and transmission/distribution projects of State and Central Sector.

(d) The above steps have resulted in reducing the overall energy shortage for the North-Eastern Region as a whole from 12.6% during 1996-97 to 11.4% during 1997-98.

Performance of New Hydel Projects

652. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the MINISTER OF POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the performance of new hydel projects under construction and progress achieved as on March 31, 1998; State-wise;

(b) the details of additional power generated/added on the completion of new projects during 1997-98 with investment made on new projects and provision of funds and targets fixed for the current year, State-wise; and

(c) the details of hydel projects from Maharashtra pending for clearance of the Central Authority for the current year and during the Ninth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) Yes Sir, The progress of hydro-electric projects under construction in the country is being reviewed regularly.

(b) The details of hydro-electric projects commissioned during 1997-98 is indicated in the enclosed Statement-I and the details of hydro-electric projects targeted for commissioning during 1998-99 is given in the enclosed Statement - II. The funds for 1998-99 will be allocated for these projects after the final plan discussions.

(c) The details of hydro-electric projects in Maharashtra pending for clearance with the Central Electricity Authority is given in the enclosed Statement-III.

Statement - I

Performance of New Hydel Projects Hydro Units Commissioned During 1997-98

Sl. No.	Name of Project/ Unit No.	State Organi- Station	Capacity (MW)	Commissioning As envisaged at the begin of the year	Schedule Actual
1.	Warna U-1	Mah./Govt. of Mah.	8	7/97	21.9.97 (Rolled)
2.	Kalinadi-II Kadra	Ktk./KPCL	50	9/97	2.6.97
3.	Lower Periyar U-2	Ker./KSEB	60	6/97	23.10.97
	U-3	Ker./KSEB	60	7/97	28.11.97
4.	Lower Bhawani U-1	T.N./TNEB	4	6/97	10.2.98
	Dam RBC U-2	T.N./TNEB	4	6/97	28.2.98
5.	Eastern Gandak U-3	Bih./BHPC	5	8/97	12.11.97
6.	Teesta Canal U-1	W.B./WBSEB	7.5	6/97	15.9.97
	Falls PH-I U-2	-do-	7.5	8/97	25.1.98
	U-3	-do-	7.5	10/97	27.3.98 (Rolled)
	PH-II U-1	-do-	7.5	9/97	18.3.98 (Rolled)
7.	Nuranang U-1	Arunachal Pd./ Power Deptt. Arunachal Pd.	2	8/97	6.8.97 (Rolled)
	U-2	-do-	2	10/97	-do-
	U-3	-do-	2	12/97	-do-
8.	Bhadra RBC* U-1	Ktk./KPCL	6	1998-99	25.3.98 (Rolled)
Total			233 MW		

* Advanced from 1998-99 programme.

Statement-II

**Performance of New Hydel Projects
Tentative Hydro Capacity Addition During 1998-99**

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Capacity (MW)	Capacity already rolled/commissioned	Programmed additions during 1998-99 (MW)	Likely date of commissioning	Remarks/Constraints
Central Sector						
1.*	Doyang (Nagaland)	3 x 25=75	Nil	25 (U-1)	12/98	
	Sub-Total (C.S.)			25		
State Sector						
Northern Region						
2.*	Sobla (U.P.)	2 x 3 = 6	Nil	6	6/98	
3.	Upper Sindh-II(J&K)	2 x 35=70	Nil	35	1/99	
4.*	Sewa St. III (J&K)	3 x 3 = 9	Nil	9	9/98	
5.*	Chenani St-III(J&K)	3 x 2.5=7.5	Nil	7.5	9/98	
6.	Ranjit Sagar Dam (Punjab)	4 x 150=600	Nil	150 (U-4)	12/98	
	Sub-Total (N.R.)			207.5		
Western Region						
7.*	Warna (Mah.)	2 x 8 = 16	8	* (U-2)		Spun on 26.4.98
8.*	Dudhganga (Mah.)	2 x 12 = 24	Nil	12 (U-1)	10/98	
9.*	Kadana Extn. (Gju.)	2 x 60 = 120	60	60	5/98	
	Sub-Total (W.R.)			80.0		
Southern Region						
10.*	Sigur (A.P.)	2 x 7.5 = 15	Nil	7.5	1/99	
11.*	Kalinadi-II:Kadra	3 x 50 = 150	50	100(U-2&3)	11/98	Kodasali
	(Karnataka) : Kodasali	3 x 40 = 120	Nil	80 (U-1&2)	3/99	40 MW Un
					6/98	Slippage
					3/99	from 1997
12.*	Poringalkuthu L.B. Extn. (Kerala)	1 x 16= 16	Nil	16	12/98	
13.*	Sathanur Dam (T.N.)	1 x 7.5 = 7.5	Nil	7.5	12/98	
	Sub Total (S.R.)			211.0		
Eastern Region						
14.*	Potteru Ph-I&II (Orissa)	1 x 3+1 x 3=6	Nil	6	12/98	
15.*	Teesta Canal Fall West Bengal)	3 x 3 x 7.5=67.5	30	15	9/98	
	Sub-Total (E.R.)			21.0	10/98	
	GRANT TOTAL:			544.5 MW		

* Slippage from 1997-98 : 219.5 MW
 New capacity during 1998-99 : 325.0 MW
 Total addition during 1998-99 : 544.5 MW

Statement - III**Performance of New Hydel Projects****Scheme under Examination in CEA**

Revised Detailed Project Report of one hydro electric project viz. Malshej Ghat (Pimpalgaon Joge) Pumped Storage Scheme (2 x 300 MW) was received in Central Electricity Authority from Government of Maharashtra, Irrigation Department [GOMID] in December, 1997 at an estimated cost of Rs. 908.52 crores (1995-96 price level). The Report is under examination in Central Electricity Authority/Central Water Commission. Comments regarding completeness and various inputs, hydro power planning and cost of E&M Works have been sent to GOMID in December 1997 and February, 1998. As per Detailed Project Report the entire scheme is proposed to be completed in a period of 7 years.

Scheme Returned to Project Authorities

Revised Detailed Project Report of Chikhaldara Pumped Storage Scheme (2 x 200 MW) was received in Central Electricity Authority in March, 1995 at an estimated cost of Rs. 931.74 crores (1994-95 price level). The scheme was examined in CEA/CWC and cleared from hydel civil design, hydrology, CMDD, CMC, irrigation planning, electrical & mechanical designs and system appraisal aspects. However, Government of Maharashtra vide their letter dated 9.12.96 had stated that clearance of the project from Central Electricity Authority is not felt necessary as the estimated cost is not exceeding Rs. 1000 crores and the scheme is proposed to be posed to private investors through competitive bidding. Central Electricity Authority vide letter dated 26.12.96 has informed Government of Maharashtra that in view of the above techno-economic clearance is no more under consideration in central Electricity Authority.

STD/ISD Facilities in Bihar

653. SHRI SURENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur) : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether all the exchanges in Bihar provided with STD/ISD facilities;
- (b) the number of exchanges yet to be provided with such facilities; and
- (c) the number of exchanges proposed to be provided with STD/ISD facilities in Bihar during 1998-99?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) 24 Exchanges are yet to be provided with STD facility.

(c) All the remaining 24 exchanges are planned to be provided with STD facility during 1998-99 subject to availability of resources.

Present Status of Maulana Azad Urdu University

654. SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of progress made in setting up Maulana Azad Urdu University in Hyderabad;
- (b) whether the officers of the University have been appointed and if so, their names and dates of appointment and, if not, the time by which they are likely to be appointed;
- (c) whether the various other authorities as envisaged in the Act have also been set up, if so, the details thereof and if not, the time by which they are likely to be set up;
- (d) the quantum of funds made available to the University so far, year-wise; and
- (e) the time by which the University is likely to become functional?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Subsequent to the appointments of the first Vice-chancellor and the first Registrar by the Visitor, the following progress has been made in setting up to the Maulana Azad National Urdu University, Hyderabad:

- (i) The Government of Andhra Pradesh has allotted 200 acres of land for the University.
- (ii) Administrative office at Hyderabad has been set up with the skeleton staff.
- (iii) Regional offices at Delhi, Patna and Bangalore have been approved.
- (iv) Two symposia have been organised by the University to formulate its developmental proposals layout.

(b) Dr. Md. Shamim Jairaipuri, Prof. of Zoology, Aligarh Muslim University has been appointed as the first V.C. of the University w.e.f. 9/1/1998; and Dr. Md. Suleman Siddiqi, Prof. of Islamic Studies, University College of Arts & Social Sciences Osmania University has been appointed as the first Registrar w.e.f. 1/5/1998.

(c) The process of constituting the first Executive Council of the University has already been set in motion

(d) A sum of Rs. 100 lakhs was released to the University during the year 1997-98.

(e) The University is expected to start its academic activities during the ensuing academic year.

Extension of National Highway No. 8-A

655. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any demand for the extension of National Highway No. 8-A from Gandhidham onwards to Jakhau via Mundra and Mandvi Port;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There has been a demand from Hon'ble Member of Parliament for extending NH 8A from Gandhidham onwards to Jakhau via Mundra and Mandvi Port. However, no such proposal has come from the State Government.

(c) As and when such a proposal is received from the State Government the same would be considered alongwith proposals of other States subject to availability of funds and *inter-se* priority.

Declaration of Road as National Highway

656. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to declare the road from Tellicherry (Kerala) to Mysore (Karnataka) as National Highway; and

(b) if so, the amount proposed to be allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Direct Local Call Facility

657. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any representation from M.Ps. to directly link the areas falling under National Capital Region especially Bulandshahr, Khurja, Sikandrabad, Dadri, Jewar etc., with local call facility;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

In some cases representation from Hon'ble MPs have been received from time to time for provision of local call facility between different towns of National Capital Region which are spread over States of Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana UP and Punjab.

(c) As per the Department's policy, the local call facility at 300 sec. pulse rate is provided in bigger exchange systems within the local area of exchange system.

Also (Local) call facility at 180 sec. pulse rate is provided :—

- (i) Between exchanges within a Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA).
- (ii) When the radial distance between two Short Distance Charging Centres (SDCC) of two SDCCs is less than 20kms.
- (iii) When the local areas of two telephone exchange systems have a common boundary. The towns of NCR which fall under any of the above three categories have been provided with local call facility at 180 sec. pulse rate.

[English]

Indian Science Congress Session

658. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a session of Indian Science Congress was held at Hyderabad in January 1998;

(b) if so, the points discussed in the Session; and

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) . (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Discussions held during the 85th Annual Session of the Indian Science Congress at Hyderabad centred around the focal theme "Science & Technology in Independent India - Retrospect and Prospect". The Congress was addressed by the then Prime Minister of India and General President of the Indian Science Congress Association. There were presentations on other current topics of research in different branches of Science and Engineering. Discussions were also held on interdisciplinary topics of contemporary interest.

Indian Science Congress Association are yet to forward their recommendations made at the Session to Government.

[Translation]

Telephone Instruments Out of Order

659. SHRI JANARDAN PRASAD MISRA :
SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHARI :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) Whether the telephone subscribers in Delhi and various other parts of the country are facing lot of problems on account of their telephone instruments being out of order;

(b) If so, whether the telephone department is harassing the subscribers by showing the non-availability of the instrument;

(c) If so, whether the Government propose to issue guidelines to the telephone exchanges of Delhi and Sitapur district in Uttar Pradesh for replacing telephone instruments which are out of order;

(d) If so, the time by which it is likely to be done; and

(e) If not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Sir, about 2 to 10% of total complaints are due to telephone instrument faults and such faults are rectified as & when reported.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The guidelines in MTNL Delhi and Sitapur district in UP have already been issued to repair the minor telephone faults at the subscribers premises. In case of major faults the telephones are replaced by a good working telephone instrument.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

(e) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Use of Polythene Bags

660. SHRI C.D. GAMIT : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the excessive use of polythene bags is causing danger to the environment;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the low quality polythene bags manufactured by many companies leave their colours if some food item is kept in them;

(d) If so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard;

(e) whether the Government is aware of the reports that sometimes these thrown away polythenes are eaten by the animals which results in death of these animals; and

(f) If so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. Polythene bags are not harmful to the environment per se, though, improper disposal may cause environmental problems.

(c) and (d) Instances have come to notice that low quality polythene bags may leave their colour on unpacked food items. The National Plastic Waste Management Task Force constituted by the Ministry of Environment and Forests has recommended restriction on the manufacture of dirty colour bags with visible contamination. An Implementation Monitoring Committee has been constituted to oversee the progress and follow-up of the implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force.

(e) No reports regarding death of animals due to the consumption of polythenes, have been brought to the notice of the Government.

(f) Does not arise.

Obscenity on Doordarshan

661. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the image of Doordarshan has mangled as the tendency to over exposing females have been increasing;

(b) If so, whether the Government are aware that through telecast of advertisements and serials, women are being presented as a commodity which is affecting the Indian culture;

(c) If so, whether the Government are aware that the films and Doordarshan Programmes have been instrumental in the nab of crimes against the women specially minor girls; and

(d) If so, the steps being taken by the Government to check the vulgar exposure and discourage the increasing tendencies of telecast of beauty contests?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise. However, Doordarshan previews all its programmes including films before telecast to ensure that they are suitable for family viewing and conform to the provisions of Broadcast and Advertisement Codes. Besides, Doordarshan considers only those films which are certified by Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) for Universal Exhibition. CBFC takes care that *modus operandi* of criminals and other visuals and words likely to incite the commission of any offence against women especially minor girls are not

depicted and that human sensibilities are not offended by vulgarity, obscenity or depravity.

Doordarshan recently did not telecast the Miss Universe 98 Beauty contest in line with its policy of not telecasting such programmes on women.

Doordarshan also shows women in a positive manner in order to prevent any crimes against women and minor girls. Programmes on empowering women are also telecast on Doordarshan to create a healthy environment which prevents atrocities against women and minor girls.

[English]

Pollution by Textile Industries

662. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the textile industries were causing water and air pollution in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Supreme Court of India vide order dated July 8, 1996 in C.W.P. 4677/85 (PIL) directed the textile mills to be located within the National Capital Region at a communicable distance from Delhi; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The textile industrial units causing air and water pollution in Delhi include the following:-

(i) Swatantra Bharat Mills, Shivaji Marg, Delhi;

(ii) DCM Silk Mills, Shivaji Marg, Delhi; and

(iii) Birla Textile Mill, Birla Lane, Subzi Mandi, Delhi.

(iv) Ajudhiya Textile Mills, Azadpur, Delhi.

(c) and (d) The Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its order dated 8th July, 1996 in the matter of WP (C) 4677/85 (PIL) - M.C. Mehta Vs. Union of India & Others directed that 168 hazardous/noxious and heavy industries listed in the order can not be permitted to operate and function in Delhi. These industries may relocate/shift themselves to any State in the National Capital Region. These industries shall stop functioning and operating in the city of Delhi w.e.f. 30th November, 1996. The Hon'ble Supreme Court has also directed the National Capital Region Planning Board to render all necessary assistance to the relocating units. It has also directed the Chief Secretaries and Secretaries (Industries) of the States of Rajasthan, U.P., Haryana and the National Capital Territory of Delhi to "provide all assistance, help and necessary facilities to the

industries which intend to relocate themselves in the industrial estates situated in their respective territories". It has also directed these four States to form a unified single agency "to act as a nodal agency to sort out all the problems of such industries". In pursuance of these orders the State Governments and the National Capital Territory of Delhi have set up a Single Window Facility for this purpose. A Unified Single Agency of the Chief Secretaries of the four States has been constituted which is monitoring the overall dispersal of industries from Delhi to the National Capital Region.

Number of Post Offices

663. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the number of post offices per 10 sq. km. in the country, State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : The details of State-wise number of post offices per 10 Sq. Km. in the country are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

S. No.	Name of State/ Union Territory	Number of Post Offices per 10 Sq. Kms.
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	0.587
2.	Assam	0.486
3.	Bihar	0.679
4.	Delhi	3.984
5.	Gujarat	0.453
	Dadra & Nagar H. Daman & Diu	0.692 1.517
6.	Haryana	0.589
7.	Himachal Pradesh	0.494
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	0.072
9.	Karnataka	0.511
10.	Kerala	1.290
	Lakshdweep	3.125
11.	Madhya Pradesh	0.253
12.	Maharashtra	0.400
	Goa	0.676
13.	North East	
	Arunachal Pradesh	0.034
	Manipur	0.301
	Meghalaya	0.213
	Mizoram	0.183
	Nagaland	0.182
	Tripura	0.674

1	2	3
14.	Orissa	0.518
15.	Punjab Chandigarh	0.764 4.386
16.	Rajasthan	0.301
17.	Tamil Nadu Pondicherry	0.924 1.901
18.	Uttar Pradesh	0.682
19.	West Bengal Sikkim Andaman & Nicobar	0.956 0.276 0.118
	All India	0.465

[Translation]

Kainla Mukta Port

664. SHRI DOWARKA PARSHAD BAIRWA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have made evaluation of any study at Kainla Mukta Port in order to provide it more infrastructure facilities based on latest technology;

(b) whether some multinational companies are keenly interested to provide infrastructure facilities to this port motivated by the latest technology;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the total foreign investment envisaged therein; and

(d) whether the State Government invited the foreign investment in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Woes of Correspondence Courses Students

665. SHRI BHIM DAHAL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether management of correspondence courses in the Delhi University send study materials and also conduct classes for the students who are doing various courses through Correspondence Courses;

(b) if so, whether for the B.Com. (Pass) 1st Year, the Management of Correspondence Courses has neither sent study materials nor has conducted any classes

whereas the examinations are likely to be held in middle June, 1998; and

(c) if so, the action the Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

New National Highway Projects

666. SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of new national highway projects sent by the Planning Commission for approval;

(b) the outline of these projects;

(c) names of the States included in the proposed schemes; and

(d) the details of amount sanctioned or amount allocated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) No such proposal has been received from the Planning Commission.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Observance of Ambedkar Jayanti

667. SHRI ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether all the Central Universities observed holiday on 14th April 1998, on the occasion of "Ambedkar Jayanti" as per the decision of the Central Government; and

(b) if not, the names of the Central Universities which did not declare holiday and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) The following Universities observed holiday on 14th April, 1998 on the occasion of "Ambedkar Jayanti" :

1. University of Delhi
2. Jawaharlal Nehru University
3. Jamia Millia Islamia
4. Indira Gandhi National Open University
5. Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University
6. Assam University

7. Tezpur University
8. North Eastern Hill University
9. University of Hyderabad
10. Pondicherry University
11. Mahatma Gandhi International Hindi Viswavidyalaya
12. Maulana Azad National Urdu university

The information from rest of the Universities is being collected and shall be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Bench of High Court in Bhopal

668. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government of Madhya Pradesh has sent any proposal to the Union Government for setting up a bench of High Court in Bhopal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total number of State capitals in the country wherein High courts or their benches have not yet been set-up; and

(d) the time by which a bench of the Bhopal High Court is likely to be set up in Bhopal?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (d) Do not arise.

(c) The principal seats of High Courts or their benches are not located in the capitals of 5 States namely Arunachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh and Orissa.

[English]

Declaration of Education a Fundamental Right

669. SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to declare Right to Education as a Fundamental Right;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) The report of the Standing Committee on Constitution (Eighty-Third Amendment) Bill is under examination. It

is felt that a wider debate on the implications of the proposed legislation should be initiated.

(c) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Grant to Universities in Madhya Pradesh

670. DR. MAHANT CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the Universities in Madhya Pradesh to whom the University Grants Commission sanctioned the Grant and the Heads under which this grant was sanctioned alongwith the amount sanctioned during the Eighth Five Year plan;

(b) the Universities in the State which have utilised the sanctioned grant;

(c) whether any complaint have been received in regard to misutilisation of grant or using the grant for some other purposes by the Universities in the State;

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

(e) the details of the grant sanctioned/likely to be sanctioned to the various Universities in the State during the Ninth Plan, University-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) University Grants Commission (UGC) provides development grants to all eligible Universities, as per the prescribed norms, and subject to availability of resources, for recruitment of teaching and supportive staff, purchase of books, journals and equipment, faculty improvement and construction of women's hostels, staff quarters, campus development etc. In addition, Non-Plan grants are also provided for certain specific purposes, which include grants for payment of scholarships and fellowships in Engineering & Technology, teacher fellowship, Junior Research Fellowship, Research Associateship etc. Development grants are allocated for the Plan period as a whole and not on a year-to-year basis. Such grants are, however, released on a yearly basis depending upon the progress of implementation of various schemes/programmes and on receipt of the utilisation Certificates and statement of expenditure of earlier grants. A Statement-I showing the grants allocated to the Universities in Madhya Pradesh for the 8th Plan and the grant released so far is attached.

(c) According to UGC, no specific complaint regarding misutilisation of grants has been received.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) A statement-II indicating the grants allocated to the Universities for the 9th Plan and the grant released so far is attached.

Statement-I

Statement showing the grants allocated/sanctioned to the Universities in
Madhya Pradesh during the 8th Plan period

(Rs. in lakhs)

S.No.	Name of the University	Grants allocated for the 8th Plan	Grants released so far
1.	Awadesh Pratap Singh University	85.00	60.00
2.	Barkatullah University	106.00	67.00
3.	Devi Ahilya University	85.00	100.12
4.	Dr. H.S. Gour University	135.00	122.90
5.	Guru Ghasidas University	82.00	50.75
6.	Indira Kala Sangeet University	55.00	31.63
7.	Jiwaji University	84.00	81.79
8.	Mahatma Gandhi Gramodhya University	28.00	28.00
9.	Rani Durgawati University	133.00	64.22
10.	Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University	85.00	63.48
11.	Vikram University	110.00	55.86
Total		988.00	725.75

Statement - II

S.No.	Name of the University	Grants allocated for the 9th Plan	Grants released so far	Grants to be sanctioned
1.	Awadesh Pratap Singh University	212.00	42.40	169.60
2.	Barkatullah University	250.00	50.00	200.00
3.	Devi Ahilya University	212.00	42.40	169.60
4.	Dr. H.S. Gour University	270.00	54.00	216.00
5.	Guru Ghasidas University	205.00	41.00	164.00
6.	Indira Kala Sangeet University	150.00	30.00	120.00
7.	Jiwaji University	210.00	42.00	168.00
8.	Mahatma Gandhi Gramodhya University	137.00	27.40	109.60
9.	Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University	212.00	42.40	169.60
10.	Rani Durgawati University	273.00	54.60	218.40
11.	Vikram University	273.00	54.60	218.40
Total:		2404.00	480.80	1923.20

**Standard of Education in
Universities/Colleges**

671. SHRI SHANKER PRASAD JAISWAL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering to take some steps to improve the education standard in Universities and Colleges;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to make it compulsory for the students to undertake one year social science course before awarding them degree; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) (a) and (b) In pursuance of National Policy on Education Government and UGC have taken several steps to improve academic standards in the Universities. Some of the major steps taken for the purpose are as follows :—

- Revision of pay scales of college and university teachers w.e.f. 1.1.1986. Further revision has become due w.e.f. 1.1.1996. However, the new scales are yet to be implemented due to certain problems. Opportunities provided for training and career advancement for teachers. All-India Eligibility Test introduced to attract best talent to the teaching profession.
- Academic staff colleges established for re-orientation of newly appointed university and college teachers.
- 27 Curriculum Development Centres in Sciences and Humanities established to modernise curricula. Model curricula has been prepared for 27 disciplines in undergraduate and postgraduate courses.
- Financial assistance provided by UGC for improvement of teaching and research under Special Assistance Programmes.
- Inter-University Centres established by UGC to provide front-line facilities and services for advancement of research in the university system.
- High priority given to grant of autonomy to selected colleges.
- Guidelines for implementation of an Academic Calendar circulated. These guidelines emphasize observance of at least 180 teaching days by universities/colleges.
- Regulations for minimum standards for the

award of first degree minimum working days etc. notified by UGC.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

**Violation of Forest (Conservation)
Act, 1980**

672. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the action taken by the Ministry pertaining to the matters of encroachment of Reserve Forest, Khas Forest Lands, its transfer in the name of private persons and sale of the same in North Sikkim;

(b) whether as per the spot enquiry and verification report by the Chief Conservator of Forests, Eastern Zone, Bhubaneswar, the encroachments are confirmed;

(c) the action taken by the Government for this gross violation of F.C.A. 1980.

(d) the action taken by the State Government in this respect so far; and

(e) the action taken by the Government in this regard so far on the assurance given in the Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) . (a) and (b) On receipt of information relating to the encroachment of reserve Forests, Khas Forest Lands, its transfer in the name of private persons and sale of the same in North Sikkim, the Chief Conservator of Forests, Eastern Zone, Bhubaneswar was asked to conduct enquiry. The report indicates *prima facie* violation of the provisions of Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

(c) The Central Government has sought the comments of the State Government on the relevant portions of the report of the Chief Conservator of Forests, Bhubaneswar. State Government has submitted only an interim report. Final report is still awaited.

(d) and (e) The Central Government has taken up the matter once again at the Chief Secretary level for expediting the comments.

**Policy for Allotment of Chambers to
Advocates**

673. SHRI E. AHAMED: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 470 on November 21, 1997 and state

(a) whether the Registry of the Supreme Court has since prepared any policy regarding the allotment of the chambers to its advocates;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) If not the reasons for each suggestion for being not accepted in the policy; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Registry of the Supreme Court for providing accommodation to all the registered advocates without chambers in the new building meant for them or elsewhere in the precinct of the Supreme Court?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected from the Registry of the Supreme Court and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Proposal for Super Thermal Power Project at MTPS

674. SHRI SUNIL KHAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the 3rd unit of Malhan Thermal Power station will be synchronized shortly;

(b) whether there is any proposal to set up Super Thermal Power Project at M.T.P.S.;

(c) if so, the likely time by which the work on this would start; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (d) Malhan thermal power station with an installed capacity of 1000 MW is still at the initial planning stage. The work on the project can only commence after DVC receives techno-economic clearance from CEA and other statutory clearances and the financing and other technical arrangements are finalised.

Electronic Telephone Exchanges in A.P.

675. SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of electronic telephone exchanges functioning in Andhra Pradesh, district-wise;

(b) whether there is any proposal to convert some of the existing manual telephone exchanges into electronic ones in various cities in Andhra Pradesh in the current year;

(c) if so, the details thereof, district-wise; and

(d) the estimated expenditure involved in conversion of these exchanges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) There are 1996 Nos. of electronic telephone exchanges working in Andhra Pradesh as on

31.3.98. District-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) There are no manual Telephone Exchanges in AP as on 31.3.98.

(c) and (d) Does not arise in view of (b) above.

Statement

District-wise Electronic Exchanges as on 31.3.98 in A.P.

S.No.	Name of the District	No of Electronic Exchanges
1.	Adilabad	61
2.	Ananthapur	127
3.	Chittoor	130
4.	Cuddapah	86
5.	East Godavari	106
6.	Guntur	114
7.	Hyderabad	48
7A.	Rangareddy	69
8.	Karimnagar	79
9.	Khammam	80
10.	Krishna	120
11.	Kurnool	125
12.	Mahaboodnagar	97
13.	Medak	86
14.	Nalgonda	83
15.	Nellore	92
16.	Nizamabad	57
17.	Prakasham	78
18.	Srikakulam	51
19.	Visakhapatnam	65
20.	Vizianagaram	50
21.	Warangal	55
22.	West Godavari	137
Total		1996

[Translation]

New Thermal Power Station in Bihar

676. SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to install new thermal power stations or increase the capacity of the

existing ones in Bihar in view of the fact that maximum quantity of coal is available there;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the capacity of existing thermal power stations in the State?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (d) The following two thermal projects under the State sector have been cleared by the Central Electricity Authority. But the work on these projects could not be taken up due to financial constraints.

1. Tenughat TPP St. II (3 x 210 MW)

2. Muzaffarpur TPP extension (2 x 250 MW)

In addition to the above State projects, the following coal based thermal projects requiring the techno-economic clearance of Central Electricity Authority are proposed to be developed through the private sector in Bihar:-

1. Jojobera TPP (240 MW) of M/s. Jamshedpur Power Company Ltd.

2. Chandil TPP (500 MW) which is presently under bidding.

[English]

Integrated Rural Energy Programme

677. SHRI GORDHANBHAI JAVIA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any kind of work has been carried out in Gujarat under the Integrated Rural Energy Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the expenditure incurred during each of the last three years on the same?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) As part of the Integrated Rural Energy Programme, block-level integrated rural energy projects are prepared and implemented under which various energy devices are promoted through extension, demonstration and incentives for meeting the energy needs of the rural people. The various energy devices promoted in IREP blocks in Gujarat include, among others, Improved Chulhas, Wind Mills, Solar Cookers, Solar Photovoltaic Systems, Motorised Potter's Wheel, Bio-gas Plants, Energy Plantation, energy Efficient Devices, etc.

An expenditure of Rs. 83.05 lakhs, Rs. 78.74 lakhs and Rs. 71.58 lakhs have been incurred during 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98 respectively.

Ban of Plying of Commercial Vehicles

678. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to ban the plying of commercial vehicles which are 15 years old in the country;

(b) if so, whether 15 years old commercial vehicles are creating maximum pollution in the environment;

(c) the time by which a final decision to impose a ban on such old commercial vehicles would be taken; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) The age of the vehicle is not related to the quantum of pollutants emitted. It depends on the maintenance of the vehicle, quality of fuel and other technological aspects.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(d) The amount of pollutants emitted from a vehicle primarily depends on its maintenance/fitness. Accordingly, as per rule 82 of the Central Motor Vehicles Rules, 1989, the Central Government have already prescribed the necessity of a "Certificate of Fitness" for every commercial/transport vehicles for their valid registration. The validity of such "Certificate of Fitness" is for two years for new vehicles and subsequently for one year. The vehicles which fail to obtain such "Certificate of Fitness" are not allowed to ply on roads.

Nehru Yuvak Kendras in Jammu and Kashmir

679. SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Nehru Yuvak Kendras functioning in Jammu and Kashmir and the areas covered by them;

(b) whether there is any proposal to open any Nehru Yuvak Kendras in Udhampur area;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the total amount spent during the last three years till date on these Kendras?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) At present, the following 14 Nehru Yuvak Kendras are functioning in Jammu & Kashmir :—

1. Kathua

2. Anantnag
3. Bidgam
4. Baramulla
5. Doda
6. Jammu
7. Kupwara
8. Kargil
9. Leh (Ladakh)
10. Pulwama
11. Poonch
12. Rajouri
13. Srinagar
14. Udhampur

(a) No Sir. There already exists a Nehru Yuva Kendra at Udhampur.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Total amount spent on these Kendras during the last three years are given below :

1995-96	Rs. 40,98,446.00
1996-97	Rs. 25,85,979.00
1997-98	Rs. 17,66,897.51

Secret Records of Netaji

680. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether a number of secret and confidential records and files are available in National Archives and the Soviet Institute of Oriental Studies, which can throw new light on the last days of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government would take up the matter with the Russian Government in order to get these papers transferred to our country; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (d) Records on Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose available with the National Archives of India are not secret or confidential. These records are open for consultation for the research purposes. The records in National Archives do not throw any new light on the last days of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

National Archives of India have no information in regard to the records available with the Soviet Institute of Oriental Studies.

Hydro Power Potential in North East

681. SHRI P.J. KURIEN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that North-East has more than one-third of the country's hydro-power potential but only a very minimal percentage of the available water resources is being exploited; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to harness the hydro-power potential in the country especially in the North-East?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) According to the assessment of hydro-electrical potential of Major/Medium Schemes carried out by Central Electricity Authority between 1978-87, the hydro-electrical potential of the country is assessed as 84,044 MW at 60% load factor. Similarly, the hydroelectric potential of the North Eastern Region is assessed at 31,857 MW at 60% load factor.

Upto 31.3.1998, 22.31% of the assessed hydroelectric potential of the country including 1.96% of hydro potential of North Eastern Region has been exploited based on completed and ongoing hydroelectric projects.

(b) To harness the hydroelectric potential several steps have been taken/proposed to be taken. These include formulation of an action plan for accelerating hydro development in the North Eastern Region. Five schemes with aggregate installed capacity of 679 MW in Central Sector and 10 schemes with an aggregate installed capacity of 399 MW are under implementation in North Eastern Region. The details are given in the enclosed Statement. The hydel projects proposed to be taken up for benefits in the 10th Plan are indicated below :—

Name of Project	Location	Agency	Capacity (MW)
1. Lower Kopili	Assam	NEEPCO	150
2. Loktak Down Stream	Manipur	NHPC	90
3. Tuirial	Mizoram	NEEPCO	60
4. Tulval	Mizoram	NEEPCO	210
5. Kameng	Arunachal Pradesh	NEEPCO	600
6. Dalalms	Assam	ASEB	6
	Total		1116

Statement

Details of hydro-electric schemes under implementation in North Eastern Region are as under:

Central Sector

Project	Location	Capacity (MW)
1. Kathalguri (7, 8 & 9)	Assam	90 *
2. Doyang	Nagaland	75
3. Agartala	Tripura	84 **
4. Ranganadi	Arunachal Pradesh	405
5. Kopli-II	Assam	25
Sub Total		679

* Units 7 & 8 synchronised in March, 1998, Unit 9 is expected to be synchronised in May, 1998.

** All the 4 units of 21 MW each have been synchronised and expected to operate commercially during 1998-99.

State Sector

Project	Location	Capacity (MW)
1. Nuranang	Arunachal Pradesh	6.0
2. Dhansiri HEP	Assam	20.0
3. Lower Borpani	Assam	100.0
4. Lakwa	Assam	48.0
5. Namrup	Assam	120.0*
6. Umiam-Umtru IV	Meghalaya	18.0
7. Serjui-B	Mizoram	9.0
8. Likim-Ro	Nagaland	24.0
9. Rokhim PH-II	Tripura	8.0
10. Leimakhong	Manipur	36.0
Sub Total		399.0
Grand Total		1078.0

* Subject to availability of gas.

Cyclone and Flood Forecasting Centres

682. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to expand the cyclone and flood forecasting centres in various coastal States;

(b) if so, the details of such Centres to be set up in the Ninth Plan period in various coastal States, location-wise; and

(c) the steps taken so far in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) India Meteorological Department (IMD) issue cyclone warnings through its Cyclone Warning Centres located at Calcutta, Bhubaneswar, Visakhapatnam, Chennai, Mumbai and Ahmedabad. 10 High Power Cyclone Detection Radars are installed along the coastal belt of India covering both east and west coast. These Radars are installed at Calcutta, Paradeep, Visakhapatnam, Machilipatnam, Chennai, Karaikal in the east coast and Cochin, Goa, Mumbai & Bhuj in the west coast of India. During the 9th Plan period, the capacity of the existing Cyclone Warning System is proposed to be augmented by induction of latest state of art technology Doppler Radars. There is no proposal to open a new Cyclone Warning Centre.

Central Water Commission is proposing to establish 3 new flood forecasting centres in Andhra Pradesh and one new flood forecasting centre in Maharashtra.

[Translation]

Forest Conservation Act on Irrigation Schemes in MP

683. SHRI RAMANAND SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of irrigation schemes affected in Madhya Pradesh due to Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, district-wise;

(b) the number of schemes sanctioned/rejected by the Government till March 31, 1998, district-wise;

(c) the number of schemes returned by the Government to State with objection, district-wise; and

(d) the number of irrigation schemes under consideration of the Government for approval, district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) to (d) The information is being compiled and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Privatisation of Services of Freight Terminals

684. SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether with a view to improving efficiency and easing cash crunch, Government proposes to take

privatisation of new Services including franchising of freight terminals and confining itself to meeting only the primary demand of freight and passenger traffic;

(b) if so, the details of the related plans; and

(c) the steps taken and being taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) The private sector participation in Major Ports has been permitted in Leasing out existing assets of the Port, Construction/creation of additional assets, such as Construction and operation of container terminals, Construction and operation of bulk, break bulk, multipurpose and specialised cargo berths, Warehousing, container Freight Stations, Storage facilities and tank farms, Crange/Handling Equipment, Setting up of captive power plants, Dry docking and ship repair facilities, Leasing of equipment for port handling and leasing of floating crafts from the private sector, Pilotage and Captive facilities for Port based industries.

(c) The guidelines for private sector participation in Port Sector have been issued.

Construction of Hostels

685. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the North Eastern Council has disbursed a total amount of Rs. 81 lakh for the construction of two hostels in Delhi University campus;

(b) if so, amount disbursed to D.U. for purpose and the amount utilised therefrom, year-wise;

(c) the progress of construction of the hostels and their locations;

(d) the time by which the hostels are likely to start functioning; and

(e) the percentage of reservation made for the students from the North Eastern region in these hostels?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by the University of Delhi, the North Eastern Council had disbursed grants of Rs. 6.00 lakhs in May, 1992 and Rs. 75.00 lakhs in May, 1994 for construction of two hostels. Out of these grants an expenditure of Rs. 4.16 lakhs has been incurred so far.

(c) and (d) The Layout Plans of the Girls Hostel to be located at North Campus of the University have since been approved by the Delhi Urban Arts

Commission and the tenders for construction of this hostel are being invited. In respect of the Boys Hostel to be constructed at South Campus of the University, approval of the Delhi Urban Arts Commission is being obtained whereafter the tenders would be invited. The construction of the two hostels is expected to be completed within a period of three years from the date of finalisation of tenders.

(e) According to the Memorandum of Understanding agreed upon by the University and the North Eastern Council, 70% of the total seats created in these two hostels will be allocated for the students of North Eastern States taking admission to postgraduate courses in the University. However, in order to avoid segregation these seats will be distributed in other hostels of the university also.

[Translation]

Construction of Thermal Power Station in Uttar Pradesh

686. SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any scheme is under consideration of the Government for construction of 3 x 250 MW Thermal Power Station at Bilthara road in Balia district of Uttar Pradesh :

(b) if so, the progress made in preparing action plan of this project;

(c) the reasons for delay in execution of this project;

(d) whether the Government are committed to remove the obstacles in the execution of this project; and

(e) if so, justification for fixing the responsibility of U.P. Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (e) The proposal of Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board (UPSEB) to install 3 x 250 MW Thermal Power Plant at Belthara Road in Balia District of Uttar Pradesh was received in the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) on 8.11.1992. The proposal was examined by CEA and it was observed that various inputs/clearances such as compliance of Section 29 of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948, Coal linkage, water availability (Central), environmental clearances and Civil Aviation Clearance had not been tied up. The Ministry of Water Resources had also imposed a condition regarding drawal of water from river Ghagara during the lean period. In view of the fact that various inputs/clearance were not tied up, UPSEB were informed by CEA in February, 1994 that this scheme was not being pursued by them and should be treated as returned. No fresh proposal for this project has been received from UPSEB.

Introduction of F.M. Band By AIR, Jhabua

687. SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government had given their sanction to introduce F.M. band by the All India Radio of Jhabua district in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the F.M. service has not yet become functional despite according the sanction; and

(d) if so, the reasons for delay?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Allotment of PCOs/STD/ISD Booths.

688. COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY :
SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the criteria laid down by the Government for allotment of PCO's STD/ISD booths;

(b) the number of PCO's/STD/ISD booths sanctioned during the last three years, State-wise;

(c) the number of applications lying pending for sanction of such booths, State-wise and

(d) the time by which these applications are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) STD PCO's are allotted by the STD PCO allotment Committee constituted one for each SSA consisting of 2 official members and non-official members one each nominated by sitting Members of Parliament representing the SSA.

Educational qualification is 8th pass for rural areas and Matric/High School pass for urban areas. Preference is given to the following categories of persons;

- (1) Handicapped including blind persons.
- (2) SC/ST applicants.
- (3) Ex. Servicemen & War Widows.
- (4) Retired DOT employees or their dependent.
- (5) Dependants of Freedom Fighters.
- (6) Charitable Institutions/Hospitals.

(b) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House as soon as possible.

Cargo Handled by Visakhapatnam Port Trust

689. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the cargo handled by the Visakhapatnam Port Trust in 1997-98 as against the target set up;

(b) the berth occupancy of the port and the profit earned during the period; and

(c) the steps proposed to increase the activities of the Port?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) The port handled a traffic of 36.01 Million Tonnes as against the target of 35.6 Million Tonnes during 1997-98.

(b) The overall average berth occupancy was 90% during 1997-98 and the Port earned a provisional net surplus of around Rs. 73.00 Crores.

(c) The Port traffic is projected to be around 45 Million Tonnes by the turn of the Century. The Port has planned many schemes during the IXth Plan including one LPG Jetty, one Multi-purpose Berth in Outer Harbour and four Multi-purpose berths in the inner Harbour for augmenting the existing Port Capacity.

Container Transhipment Terminal at Cochin

690. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken by the Government regarding the proposed Container Transhipment Terminal at Cochin;

(b) whether the Government are aware of the inordinate delay in taking steps in this direction; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) to (c) M/s. Frederic R. Harris, Dutch Consultants in their report submitted in 1991 recommended establishment of Container Transhipment Terminal at Vallarpadam, Cochin. The report is being updated. Simultaneously, Expressions of Interest have been invited from Port Developers/Operators for establishment of the Terminal on Build, Operate and Transfer Basis.

Delimitation Commission

691. SHRI CHANDU LAL AJMEERA :
SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH :

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a Delimitation Commission for Lok Sabha constituencies;

- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any procedural problems exist in establishing the Delimitation Commission; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof ;

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) No. Sir

- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) and (d) As per existing provisions of the Constitution, fresh delimitation can be taken only after the publication of figures of the first census taken after the year 2000. In the meeting of leaders of various political parties held on 22nd May, 1998, it was felt that as the year 2000 is close by, fresh delimitation may be taken as per existing provisions of the Constitution in this regard.

Full Time Programmes in LPT Centres

692. SHRI N. DENNIS : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

- (a) the steps taken by the Government to provide full time programmes in the Low Power Transmission Centres not having such facilities;
- (b) whether the L.P.T. at Martandom of Kanyakumari District, Tamil Nadu would be provided with full time programmes; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) Provision of full time programmes in the LPT centres not having such facilities is linked to sanction and deployment of full complement of staff at these centres. Sanction and deployment of requisite staff at these centres including Martandom of Kanyakumari district is a continuous process.

[Translation]

Rihand Hydro-Electric Power Project in U.P.

693. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

- (a) whether Madhya Pradesh has 15 per cent share in the electricity being generated at Rihand Hydro-Electric Power project in Uttar Pradesh;
- (b) whether the allotted share of electricity is not being supplied to Madhya Pradesh by Uttar Pradesh;
- (c) whether there has been a contract between Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh that Madhya Pradesh would be compensated financially at the settled rate for not being supplied its share of electricity;

- (d) if so, whether this loss is being compensated;
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor;
- (f) whether the Union Government would issue any instructions for the payment of compensation; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir, Madhya Pradesh has a 15% share in Rihand Hydro Electric Project.

- (b) and (c) Due to shortage of power, Uttar Pradesh has been unable to supply to Madhya Pradesh.
- (d) and (e) According to the information furnished by Uttar Pradesh State Electricity Board, the outstanding amount payable upto September 1997 was Rs. 29.91 crores.

(f) and (g) The time frame for settling the outstanding dues will have to be decided by the two State Governments.

[English]

Employment to SCs/STs in the Ministry

694. SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

- (a) the number of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes provided employment in her Ministry and its allied offices during the last two months;
- (b) whether the quote reserved for SCs and STs in these Departments have been fulfilled; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Child Welfare Centres in Bihar and Maharashtra

695. SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI :
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

- (a) the number of child welfare centres opened in backward and tribal areas of Bihar and Maharashtra during the Eighth Five Year Plan;
- (b) whether any foreign aid is being extended to the States for these welfare centres; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) There is no Central or Centrally Sponsored Scheme under which Child Welfare Centres are functioning. However, for welfare and development of children in tribal and backward regions, 598 projects in Bihar and 326 projects in Maharashtra were sanctioned upto Eighth Five Year Plan under Centrally Sponsored Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme. Apart from that 177 Creches, 230 Centres for Early Childhood Education and 159 Centres under Bahwadi Nutrition Programme were functioning in Bihar. In Maharashtra, 1444 Creches and 957 Centres under Bahwadi Nutrition Programme were functioning.

(b) and (c) The World Bank Assistance to the tune of Rs. 76.29 crores was available for 210 ICDS Projects in Bihar during Eighth Five Year Plan. No World Bank Assistance was available for Maharashtra during Eighth Five Year Plan. The support from UNICEF was available for supply of equipment and material such as jeeps, baby weighing scales, projectors, etc.

[English]

Construction of Bridges and National Highways in West Bengal

696. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the bridges and National Highways constructed in West Bengal during Eighth Five Year Plan and to be constructed during Ninth Plan;

(b) whether the work undertaken on these bridges and National Highways is behind the scheduled time;

(c) if so, the reasons for the inordinate delay; and

(d) the corrective measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) 1. Eighth Five Year Plan:

(i) **Bridges** : Construction of 12 Nos of bridges have been completed during the Eighth Five Year Plan.

(ii) **Roadworks** : In addition to works of miscellaneous nature such as replacement of culverts, improvement of riding quality etc., four laning of 77.4 km length of NHs and construction of one bypass by Public Works Department and improvement of 23 km. to intermediate lane by Border Roads Organisation were undertaken.

2. Ninth Plan:

(i) **Bridges** : 28 Nos of bridges with estimated cost of about Rs. 84.65 crore are proposed to be taken up for replacement/reconstruction.

(ii) **Roads**: About 34 Nos of Improvement works falling in different categories such as widening to two lanes and four lanes including strengthening of existing pavement inclusive of the works of miscellaneous nature such as improvement of riding quality, providing hard shoulder with estimated cost of Rs. 203.50 crore are proposed to be taken up.

(b) Yes Sir, construction of few bridges is running behind schedule.

(c) and (d) The delay in case of bridges is due to some contractual problems. Works are reviewed periodically and the State Government is being continuously pursued to remove the bottlenecks and settle the contractual issues leading to early completion of the project.

Financial Assistance for Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation

697. SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation is running into heavy losses for the last three years;

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

(c) the financial assistance provided by the Government to Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation during the said period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) and (b) Yes Sir. The details are as under:-

Year	Loss (Rs. in Crores)
1995-96	3.17
1996-97	136.24
1997-98 (R.E.)	114.78

Reasons for losses are as under :-

(i) Operations on uneconomic obligatory routes;

(ii) Operations on routes falling on bad roads causing high cost of maintenance;

(iii) Concessions to students, physically handicapped, Government Servants etc.;

(iv) Uneconomic fares ;

(v) Increase in Prices of diesel and petroleum products;

- (vi) Payment of arrears against Labour Settlement;
- (vii) Payment of Ad-hoc Ex-gratia to some employees;
- (viii) Payment of Ex-gratia to all employees;
- (ix) Increase in Gratuity limit;
- (x) Enhancement of the rate of P.F. subscription.
- (c) No financial assistance has been provided to Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation either by the State Government or Central Government during the said period.

Pulse Rate

698. SHRI K.A. SANGTAM : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether pulse rate is very high in Nagaland and varies from town to town;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor and the remedial measures being taken/proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard; and
- (c) the comparative pulse rate in other North-Eastern States, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) No Sir. However, pulse rate varies as per the distance between two short Distance Charging Centres within Nagaland, which is a Long Distance Charging Area (LDCA).

(b) Not applicable in view of (a) above.

(c) The charging of calls in other North-Eastern States is on the same pattern which is applicable within Nagaland as well as in other parts of the country. The details are given below :

	Pulse Rate		Outside the State (To other parts of the country)
	Within the State Maximum	Minimum	
1. Arunacahal Pradesh	180 sec.	4 sec.	Upto 2 sec.
2. Manipur	180 sec.	8 sec.	-do-
3. Meghalya	180 sec.	4 sec.	-do-
4. Mizoram	180 sec.	4 sec.	-do-
5. Nagaland	180 sec.	8 sec.	-do-
6. Tripura	180 sec.	8 sec.	-do-
7. Assam	180 sec.	4 sec.	-do-

LPTs to be Upgraded during Ninth Plan

699. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

- (a) the details of LPTs proposed to be upgraded in Ninth Plan, State-wise;
- (b) whether the Government of Karnataka has submitted any proposal for the upgradation of LPTs into HPTs;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the land for the purpose has already been acquired;
- (e) if so, the reasons for not starting the upgradation work; and
- (f) the present position of the proposals?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) A statement is enclosed.

(b) to (f) A proposal for upgradation of Low Power TV transmitter (LPT) at Raichur to High Power TV transmitter (HPT) has been received from Government of Karnataka and the scheme has been sanctioned.

Implementation of the project will be taken up after State Government hands over the identified site, depending on availability of resources and provision of other infrastructural facilities.

Statement

Existing LPTs proposed to be upgraded to HPTs in Phases

State	Location
1	2
Andhra Pradesh	Warangal
Assam	Guwahati DD II Silchar DD II
Bihar	Jamshedpur Patna DD II
Gujarat	Surat
Jammu & Kashmir	Kathua Srinagar DD II
Karnataka	Hassan Mangalore Mysore Raichur
Kerala	Cannanore Cochin DD II Trivandrum DD II

1	2
Madhya Pradesh	Guna Shahdol Ambikapur Bhopal DD II
Maharashtra	Chandrapur Jalgaon Ratnagiri Nagpur DD II
Meghalaya	Tura DD II
Orissa	Baleshwar Berhampur Sambalpur DD II
Rajasthan	Ajmer Jodhpur Jaipur DD II
Tamilnadu	Kumbakonam
Tripura	Agartala DD II
Uttar Pradesh	Banda Lakhimpur Lucknow DD II
West Bengal	Balurghat Krishnanagar Kharagpur Shantiniketan Murshidabad DD II
Pondicherry	Pondicherry

[Translation]

Model Kendriya Vidyalayas

700. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be please to state :

(a) the total number of Model Kendriya Vidyalaya in the country, State-wise and location-wise;

(b) whether the Government propose to set up more such Vidyalayas;

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

(d) whether the residential facility is available for the teachers of these schools; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (d) Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan has decided to develop 50 Vidyalayas as Model Kendriya Vidyalayas at present. The statement showing the location and residential facility in these Vidyalayas is attached.

(e) The residential facility for teachers is available in 40 Kendriya Vidyalayas. The residential facility will be extended subject to the availability of land and funds in remaining Kendriya Vidyalayas. In addition construction work is in progress in two Vidyalayas and planning for construction is in hand for another four Vidyalayas.

*Statement**List of Kendriya Vidyalayas to be developed as Model Kendriya Vidyalayas*

State	Location & Name	Availability of Residential Facility
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	1. Nausenabagh No. II, Vishakhapatnam	Yes
	2. No. 1 Uppal, Hyderabad	Yes
Arunachal Pradesh	3. No. 1 Itanagar	Yes
Assam	4. Tejpur No. 1	Yes
	5. Khanapara, Guwahati	Yes
Bihar	6. Kankar Bagh No. 1, Patna	Yes
	7. No. 1 Bokaro	Under Planning
Delhi	8. No. 1 Delhi Cantt	Yes
	9. Andrews Ganj	Caretaker only
Goa	10. No. 1 Vasco-Da-Gama	Yes
Gujarat	11. No. 1 Ahmedabad	No
	12. IFFCO, Gandhidham	Yes

1	2	3
Haryana	13. No. 1 Ambala Cantt.	Yes
	14. No. 1 Sirsa	Under Planning
Himachal Pradesh	15. Shimla	Yes
Jammu & Kashmir	16. No. 1 Jammu	Yes
Karnataka	17. MEG & Centre, Bangalore	Yes
	18. No. 1 Hubli	Yes
	19. Mysore	Under Planning
Kerala	20. No. 1 Palghat	Under Construction
	21. Pattom, Trivendrum	Yes
Madhya Pradesh	22. No. 1 Bhopal	Yes
	23. No. 1 Gwalior	Yes
	24. No. 1 Jabalpur	Yes
Maharashtra	25. No. 2 Colaba, Mumbai	Yes
	26. BEG and Centre, Pune	Yes
Manipur	27. No. 1 Imphal	Yes
Meghalaya	28. Shillong (Upper)	Under Construction
Nagaland	29. Dimapur	Under Planning
Orissa	30. No. 1 Bhubaneshwar	Yes
	31. Sambalpur	Yes
	32. No. 1 Pathankot	Yes
Punjab	33. No. 1 Bhatinda	Yes
	34. Cantt. No. 1 Jalandhar	Yes
	35. No. II Jaipur Cantt.	Yes
Rajasthan	36. No. 1 AFS Jodhpur	Yes
	37. No. 1 Tiruchirapalli	Yes
Tamilnadu	38. Minabakkam, Chennai	Yes
	39. No. 1 Agartala	Yes
Tripura	40. No. II Agra Cantt.	Yes
Uttar Pradesh	41. Air Force Station Bamrauli, Allahabad	Yes
	42. Air Force Station, Bareilly	Yes
Bamrauli, Allahabad	43. Sector-J, Allganj, Lucknow	Yes
	44. IIT Kanpur	Yes
	45. Forest Research Institute, Dehradun	Yes
Lucknow	46. Hathibarkela No. 1, Dehradun	Yes
	47. No. 1 Jhansi Cantt.	Yes
	48. No. 1, Salt Lake City, Calcutta	No
West Bengal	49. Barrackpore (Army) Barrackpur	Yes
	50. Sector-47, Chandigarh	No
Union Territory		
Chandigarh		

[English]

Training Packages

701. SHRI G. GANGA REDDY : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL), a deemed university under the Ministry, has recently signed a memorandum of understanding with some foreign universities to provide specially designed training packages in professional English for their teachers;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any negotiations are underway with some other countries also for similar training packages, and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the financial earnings likely to accrue to the country as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages (CIEFL) has recently entered into Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with the following universities to provide specially designed training packages in professional English for their teachers:

1. The University of Aden, Yemen Republic
2. International University of Kyrgyzstan
3. Chui University of the Kyrgyz Republic
4. Arabeey Kyrgyz State Pedagogical University

(c) and (d) Negotiations are underway with the Republic of Maldives and the Bishkek Humanities University, Kyrgyz Republic. The CIEFL has charged a comprehensive fee of US Dollars 8400.00 from a group of 12 students who joined the Institute in pursuance of the MOU signed with the Universities in Kyrgyzstan. Such programmes are on self-financing basis for participants from abroad and the Institute has considerable potential of earnings in foreign exchange. As this stage, it is not possible to project the exact financial earnings.

[Translation]

Loss to M.P.E.B.

702. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board has suffered an annual loss of 400 crore and 1200

crore of rupees respectively due to subsidised power supply to domestic consumers and agriculture sector;

(b) if so, whether Union Government are contemplating any action plan to cope up with the situation; and

(c) if so, the details of the proposed action plan?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P. R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) As per the unaudited accounts of the Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board for the year 1996-97, the loss due to subsidised supply of power to the domestic sector and the agricultural sector was Rs. 464.22 crores and Rs. 1451.17 crores respectively, due to lack of cash subvention by the State Government of Madhya Pradesh.

(b) and (c) The President of India has promulgated an Ordinance on 25th April, 1998, to set up a Central Electricity Regulatory Commission and State Electricity Regulatory Commissions. The establishment of the Regulatory Commissions would help in improving the financial conditions of the SEBs by rationalising tariffs and cross-subsidising wherever necessary. This would help in the inflow of greater resources into the power sector, thereby improving the financial health of the SEBs.

[English]

Losses to SEBs

703. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA . Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state

(a) whether most of the State Electricity Boards are running at a loss mainly due to the subsidised supply of power to farmers;

(b) if so, the names of the States which are supplying power to farmers and domestic use at subsidised rates, and the extent of subsidy given by them during the last three years; and

(c) the extent to which this loss due to subsidy has been compensated by the Union Government/State Government?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) The failure on the part of the State Governments to give cash subsidy to the SEBs for the supply of power to farmers by the State Electricity Boards is only one of the reasons for the SEBs running into loss. The other reasons are low Plant Load Factor (PLF), high T&D losses and consequently high fuel consumption in some Thermal Power Stations etc.. In addition to theft of power leading to high transmission and distribution losses.

(b) The accounts of the State Electricity Boards are required to be forwarded to the Central Electricity Authority within six months of the close of the year to which the accounts relate. As such the accounts for the

year 1997-98 are not available. A Statement-I accounting the average cost of supply of power and average realisation on account of the power supplied by the State Electricity Boards to the agricultural sector and the domestic sector during 1995-96 and 1996-97 is enclosed.

(c) Union Government does not extend subsidy to the SEBs on account of supply of subsidised power by the Boards. However, a Statement-II indicating the subsidy given by the State Governments to the SEBs during 1995-96 and 1996-97 is enclosed.

Statement-I

Sl. No.	Name of SEB	1995-96			1996-97		
		Average cost of supply of power	Average Realisation		Average cost of supply of power	Average Realisation	
			Agriculture	Domestic		Agriculture	Domestic
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
							(p/kwh)
1.	A.P.	154.95	3.18	107.50	199.20	13.35	142.53
2.	Assam	365.59	169.81	199.49	353.60	181.22	121.43
3.	Bihar	282.93	16.24	109.26	282.93	16.24	109.26
4.	Gujarat	182.78	19.09	119.22	208.64	20.21	149.53
5.	H.P.	104.34	128.08	67.95	122.01	142.27	58.55
6.	Haryana	211.08	51.93	133.48	228.72	52.41	169.37
7.	Karnataka	155.29	2.10	10.77	188.54	5.59	91.11
8.	Kerala	100.43	23.74	60.98	129.35	26.94	59.77
9.	Meghalaya	156.13	68.00	72.23	210.07	12.14	93.48
10.	M.P.	170.99	18.48	65.17	197.27	28.40	73.13
11.	Maharashtra	180.43	16.47	111.42	201.87	22.55	129.19
12.	Orissa	213.87	63.87	88.85	213.87	53.87	88.85
13.	Punjab	157.66	38.54	136.40	167.07	28.46	135.02
14.	Rajasthan	195.88	37.38	106.10	195.88	37.38	106.10
15.	Tamil Nadu	169.75	0.13	121.45	189.69	0.75	131.92
16.	U.P.	210.34	44.32	85.34	221.28	35.32	103.14
17.	W.B.	177.29	16.88	76.79	193.23	19.29	98.00

Statement-II

Statement indicating the subsidy given by the State Govts. to the State Electricity Boards during 1995-96 and 1996-97

S. No.	Name of the SEB	1995-96	1996-97
1	2	3	4
1.	Andhra Pradesh	0.00*	0.00*
2.	Assam	0.00	0.00
3.	Bihar	0.00	N.A.
4.	Gujarat	459.00	262.53
5.	Himachal Pradesh	0.00	0.05
6.	Haryana	192.00*	219.32
7.	Karnataka	551.00	533.00

1	2	3	4
8.	Kerala	1.00	0.00
9.	Meghalaya	8.00	N.A.
10.	Madhya Pradesh	592.00*	310.00
11.	Maharashtra	631.00	258.71
12.	Orissa	190.00	N.E.
13.	Punjab	468.00	0.00
14.	Rajasthan	235.00	44.48
15.	Tamil Nadu	416.00	370.10
16.	Uttar Pradesh	0.00	0.00
17.	West Bengal	82.00	55.00

* - Excluding adjustment against State Govt. Loans.
N.A. - Not Available.
N.E. - Not in existence.

JUNE 1, 1998

99 *Written Answers***Private Sector Power Projects**

704. SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

- the number of power projects set up by different private sector companies in the country;
- the location of these projects, State-wise;
- the capacity of these projects;
- whether some of those projects are pending for the approval of Union Government;
- if so, the details thereof; and
- the steps taken to approve those projects?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) As per information available, the following private power projects on the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) /Letter of Intent (LoI) etc. route (costing more than Rs. 100 crores) being monitored by the Government have been set up and have commenced generation:

S.No.	Name of the project/location	Capacity (MW)
1.	Hazira Combined Cycle Gas Turbine, Distt. Surat, Gujarat	515
2.	Baroda Combined, Cycle Gas Turbine, Distt. Baroda, Gujarat	167
3.	Paguthan Combined Cycle Gas Turbine, Distt. Bharn, Gujarat	655*
4.	Jegurupadu Combined Cycle Gas Turbine, Distt. East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh	216
5.	Godavari Combined Cycle Gas Turbine, Distt. East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh	208

* Only 414 MW has been commissioned so far.

(d) All the above projects have been accorded techno-economic clearance of Central Electricity Authority.

(e) and (f) Do not arise in view of reply to part (d) above.

[Translation]

Opening of Telephone Exchanges in Bihar

705. SHRI R.L.P VERMA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any approval for opening a Telephone exchange through satellite in the Block headquarters of Ganwa and Satganwa in the Hilly area of Giridih

district in the Vananchal area in Bihar was accorded in 1996-97;

(b) if so, the reasons for which it has not installed so far;

(c) whether Government propose to set up new telephone exchange with adequate capacity in the State during 1998-99;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes Sir. It is proposed to provide Satellite connectivity to Satganwa telephone exchange through Satellite in Giridih district in the Vananchal area of Bihar during 1998-99. There is no proposal for Ganwa.

(b) The telephone exchange at Satganwa was opened during 1996-97 but Satellite connectivity could not be provided due to non-availability of equipment. However, the Satellite equipment has been supplied during 1997-98 and all-out efforts are being made to commission the same as early as possible.

(c) Yes, Sir

(d) The SSA-wise list of new telephone exchanges proposed to be opened in Bihar during 1998-99, is given in the enclosed Statement

(e) Does not arise

Statement

SSA-wise details of new telephone exchanges proposed to be opened in Bihar during 1998-99

Name of the SSA	No. of new Telephone Exchanges.
Arrah	3
Bhagalpur	3
Chapra	1
Darbhanga	5
Dumka	1
Gaya	2
Hazaribagh	1
Jamshedpur	2
Katihar	1
Munger	1
Muzaffarpur	4
Patna	1
Ranchi	5

[English]

Modernisation of Postal Services

706. SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI :
SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR :
SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have undertaken any survey to modernise the postal services through the induction of new technology in the country particularly in Gujarat; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for expansion of postal services in inaccessible, hilly parts and rural areas of the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) The Mid Term Review of the 8th Plan of the Department of Posts (1992-97) as carried out in 1994, in consultation with the Planning Commission, and a decision was taken to take action to transform the postal system into a modern one with necessary technological inputs.

(b) Post Office are opened subject to norm based justification and availability of target and resources. While for opening post offices in rural areas, a population of 3000, minimum distance from the nearest post office of 3 kms. and the minimum anticipated revenue earned of 33-1/3% of the cost has been fixed. For hilly, tribal, desert and inaccessible areas the norms for population and anticipated income have been further relaxed. While the population in these areas should be 500 in an individual village or 1000 in a group of villages, the anticipated income has been fixed at a minimum of 15% of the cost.

Membership of Vishwa Yuvak Kendras

707. SHRI RAMCHANDRA VEERAPPA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the total membership of institutions, social organisations and club affiliated to Vishwa Yuvak Kendra in the country as on date, State-wise; and

(b) the budget allocation earmarked for the Vishwa Yuvak Kendra for the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Vishwa Yuvak Kendra is a Non-Government Organisation. As reported by the Vishwa Yuvak Kendra, the total number of institutions, social organisations and club in India, affiliated to it, as on date is 8000. The State-wise break-up is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) No Budget allocation has been earmarked for the Vishwa Yuvak Kendra for the current financial year.

Statement

S.No.	Name of the State	No. of Institutions, Social Organisations and Clubs in India Affiliated to Vishwa Yuvak Kendra as on Date
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	50
2.	Andhra Pradesh	469
3.	Assam	286
4.	Bihar	410
5.	Delhi	995
6.	Goa	208
7.	Gujarat	316
8.	Himachal Pradesh	50
9.	Haryana	294
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	105
11.	Kerala	549
12.	Karnataka	302
13.	Maharashtra	382
14.	Mizoram	56
15.	Meghalaya	55
16.	Manipur	266
17.	Madhya Pradesh	301
18.	Nagaland	205
19.	Orissa	486
20.	Rajasthan	252
21.	Punjab	239
22.	Sikkim	206
23.	Tripura	210
24.	Tamilnadu	474
25.	Uttar Pradesh	442
26.	West Bengal	392
Total		8000

Public Participation in Conservation of Resources

708. SHRI MUKUL WASNIK : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any plan to encourage the public participation in conservation and the sustainable use of our resources;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have initiated any steps to check the piracy of our traditional knowledge and biological resources; and

(d) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) The Government encourages public participation in conservation and sustainable use of biological resources. For example, the ecodevelopment programmes around national parks, sanctuaries and other reserve forest areas provide for the participation of local communities in the conservation of these areas and protection of wildlife. The Joint Forest Management approach for regeneration of degraded forest lands is based on the participation of the local communities.

(c) and (d) After having broad based consultations with Ministries/Departments, academic and technical institutions, experts, NGOs and other stakeholders on protecting biological resources and indigenous knowledge associated with them and securing equitable benefits arising out of the use of these resources, the Government had constituted an expert Committee to suggest a draft legislation on Biological Diversity.

The Committee gave a draft outline of an Act on Biological Diversity in October, 1997. The Government is now further considering the proposal to enact a law on Biological Diversity. The proposal *inter alia* includes the issue of regulating access to biological resources and indigenous knowledge associated with them with the purpose of ensuring equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the use of such resources.

Anta Gas Thermal Power Project, Stage-II

709. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether NTPC has earlier planned gas power station of 413 MW capacity at Anta and no head way on it was made as the Union Government has not provided gas linkage for Anta Gas Thermal Power Project, Stage-II;

(b) if so, whether the Government of India allocated gas to power stations in Delhi and Gujarat after the Anta Stage-II was conceived;

(c) if so, the considerations on which it was done;

(d) the likely time by which the Anta Stage-II gas based thermal station of NTPC is likely to get gas allocation and the Union Government sanction;

(e) whether the gas allocation for the existing Anta GTPS is adequate to operate it as base load station as per policy of the Government;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) If not, the time by which the additional allocation of gas is likely to be made for stage-I and also for Stage-II;

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) had originally formulated a proposal for expansion of Anta Gas Power Project Stage-II (430 MW) in 1988 considering gas as the main fuel to be supplied from HBJ pipeline. However, because of non-availability of gas, the proposal could not be processed further, the expansion project was reformulated in 1997 with a capacity of 650 MW with naphtha as a primary fuel.

(b) and (c) The allocation of gas to the Power stations in Delhi, Gujarat and Anta were made at the same time.

(d) to (g) Lineage of naphtha at 80% FLF for Anta expansion project has been provided in November, 1997. Anta gas power plant stage-I is supplied gas from HBJ pipeline. The capacity of HBJ Pipeline is 33.40 MCMD has already been made. Since the allocation has already succeeded the projected availability of gas by ONGC, additional allocation of gas to Anta gas power project is not possible at this stage. The expansion proposal is presently under appraisal by Central Electricity Authority (CEA) for techno-economic clearance.

Vacancies in High Courts and Supreme Court

710. SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN
 PROF. P.J. KURIEN :
 SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT :
 SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :
 SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK :

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of sanctioned strength of the permanent and additional judges of various High Courts and Supreme Court of India;

(b) the total number of posts of Judges lying vacant in various High Courts as well as in the Supreme Court of India and the percentage that such vacancies constitute with respect to the total number of sanctioned posts of judges as on April 30, 1998;

(c) the time from which these posts are lying vacant; and

(d) the steps taken to fill up the posts and the time by which these are likely to be filled?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) to (d) As 1.5.1998, against the sanctioned strength of 26 Judges, 21 Judges were in position in the Supreme Court of India, leaving 5

vacancies of Judges to be filled up. These vacancies arose on 12.6.1997, 13.7.1997, 21.12.1997, 18.1.1998 and 1.5. 1998.

In the High Court, as on 1.5.1998, against the sanctioned strength of 585 Judges/Additional Judges, 481 Judges/Additional Judges were in position, leaving 104 vacancies of Judges/Additional Judges to be filled up. These posts became vacant, from time to time, due to retirement and transfer etc. of the Judges.

The procedure for such appointments involves consultations among several constitutional authorities. Every effort is being made to fill existing vacancies at the earliest.

[Translation]

Telephone Facility in Uttar Pradesh

711. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA
SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether thousands of villages in Uttar Pradesh have been denied the modern telephone facilities in spite of the loan sanctioned by the Asian Development Bank;

(b) if so, the number of villages involved and the reasons for depriving them of modern telephone facilities; and

(c) the action taken by the Government to implement this project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) to (c) A loan was negotiated with the Asian Development Bank to cover 36773 villages of Uttar Pradesh (East). A tender was called for supply of equipment, but the equipment did not meet our technical requirement and as such the tender was cancelled.

We are going ahead with our programme of covering all the villages with telephones during Ninth plan period. A combination of technologies like Under ground cables, overhead line, MARR systems, opening of new exchanges and Wireless in local loop for Macro areas etc. will be used during this period.

[English]

Shortage of Cables

712. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that there is acute shortage of basic materials like cables etc. in Panskura telephone exchange in West Bengal;

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

(c) the measure taken by the Government to step up the supply of the cables and release of necessary funds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) There is no shortage.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Supply of funds and Cables is made from time to time based on the development and operational requirements.

Power Generation in the Country

713. SHRI KAMAL NATH : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the total power generation during the last three years in the country;

(b) projected power requirement in the year 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01; and

(c) the steps the Government propose to take to meet the shortfall?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) The total energy generation in the country during the years 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98 are given as under:

1995-96	379.877 Billion Units (BU)
1996-97	394.488 BU
1997-98	420.622 BU respectively.

(b) As per the 15th Electric Power Survey report the project energy requirement for the years 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01 are given as under:

1998-1999	469.507 Billion Units (BU)
1999-2000	502.254 BU
2000-2001	535.93 BU respectively.

(c) To meet the projected demand. Government have initiated various steps which *inter-alia* include addition in capacity, encouraging private sector participation in power generation, better demand side management, energy conservation measures, renovation and modernisation of existing plants, reduction of transmission and distribution losses and effective utilisation of generation capacity by transfer of power from surplus regions to deficit regions through inter-regional links.

High Court Bench in Kolhapur, Maharashtra

714. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBHA MANDLIK : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether no high court bench exists in Kolhapur region of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, whether the State Government has sent any representation to set up a high court bench in Kolhapur; and

(c) if so, the decision of the Union Government in regard to setting up of High Court bench at Kolhapur?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) to (c) No proposal has been received from the Government of Maharashtra, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court, in terms of Section 51 (2) of the States Reorganisation Act, 1956, for establishing a permanent Bench of the Bombay High Court at Kolhapur. As such, no action has been taken by the Central Government in this regard.

Filling up of Vacancies in Indian Institute of Mass Communication

715. SHRI KARIYA MUNDA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether not even a single vacancy in Group "D" post in the reserved category of OBC has been filled up by the concerned authorities of Indian Institute of Mass Communication, JNU New Complex, New Delhi since the very date of the announced policy of the Government case of OBCS;

(b) if so, the details of all such vacancies which are to be filled up through direct recruitment; and

(c) the action proposed by the concerned authorities to fill up the same?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ)

(a) to (c) Out of three vacant posts of Group "D" in Indian Institute of Mass Communication, one post has been reserved for OBC and the process of selection by direct recruitment is on.

Collection of Toll Tax on Bridges

716. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether toll tax is still being charged from the people on the two bridges over Ganga river on Shastri Bridge and the other between Tellarganj and Papamau in Allahabad, U.P.;

(b) if so, the reasons thereof and the steps taken to steps the collection of toll tax;

(c) the years in which these bridges were constructed and the cost of the construction of the bridges, bridge-wise; and

(d) the money collected towards the toll tax, bridgewise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has been intimated by the State Government of Uttar Pradesh that the cost of the bridges has not yet been recovered. The toll tax shall be stopped after the full recovery of cost including interest thereon.

(c) and (d) :

Name of the Bridge	Year of construction	Cost of construction	Money collected till March, 98
(Rs. in lakhs)			
Shastri Bridge	1982	1150.70	1604.00
Papamau Bridge	1988	857.48	696.60

[Translation]

Telephone Exchanges in U.P.

717. SHRIMATI KAMAL RANI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state,

(a) whether Government propose to set up new telephone exchanges in Uttar Pradesh during 1998-99.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of old telephone exchanges in the State;

(d) whether telephone service has not yet been provided in Jahanabad under the Ghatampur region in Uttar Pradesh;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor, and

(f) the time by which the Government propose to set up a telephone exchange in Jahanabad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A list is given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) Number of telephone exchanges in the State as on 31st March, 1990 is 2085 (Two thousand Eighty Five).

(d) Telephone service has already been provided in Jahanabad under the Ghatampur region in Uttar Pradesh.

(e) and (f) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

<i>Statement</i>				
Name of District	Name of Exchange	1	2	
1	2			
Allahabad	Colonelganj	Almora	Bhaislachina	
	Behrana		Kanda	
	Subedarganj		Barakota	
	George Town		Dhauladevi	
	Muthiganj		Dharam Garh	
	Kara		Azamgarh	Maltari
	Mansurabad			Latghat
	Bariya Rampur			Mehnajpur
	Dbasanpur			Bankat
	Paschim Sarira			Lakhnapur
	Shahjadpur	Martinganj		
	Jalalpur	Tahbarpur		
	Gheenpur	Lahideeh		
	Holagarh	Singhpur		
	Sarawan	Kharlhani		
	Barethi	Tarwa		
	Kotwa	Gosain Ki Bazar		
	Sarangapur	Patwadh		
	Dhanupur	Salarpur		
	Saral Mumrej	Rajpura		
Kokhraj	Jamed			
Drobahan	Badaun	Prem Nagar		
Unchdeeh		Subhash Nagar		
Nadau		Bareilly University		
Ritha		Kwiladia (Bhaapura)		
Dinger		Kiyara		
Brithal		Bhitari (Chainpur)		
Sahta		Dhaura Tanda		
Sahaganj		Dunka		
CTO Building		Shahi		
Ag-Gwallor Road		Katau Mill (Bahru)		
Ag-Belanganj	Bijnore	New Exchange-1		
Dayalbagh		New Exchange-2		
Aligarh-Etah Road		New Exchange-3		
Sattu Kheda		New Exchange-4		
Nagariya		New Exchange-5		
Gohlan		Mohamadpur		
Pora		Nidroo		
		Dwarkesh		
		Kadrabad		

1	2	1	2
Barabanki	Tera Saddipur	Etawah	Etawah
	Saidkhanpur		Parasana
	Mahmoodabad		Baralokpur
	Hetmapur		Khardull
	Mau Gaurpur		Kudarkot
	Bhelwal		Ushrahar
	Khajuri		Achalpur
	Sarai Barai		Garhi
	Sihalli		Saraya Ahghat
	Kasba Ichauli		Besundhara
	Mohammadpur Khala		Dhumari
	Ramuapur Tiwari		Shahganj
	Baddupur		Sukulbazar
	Kols		Nabariganj
	Bishunpur		Deogaon
	Mohdipur Chaksar		Gaddepur
	Mittal		Uthrethi
	Nindoora		Anand Nagar
	Rauzagaon		Rabtipur
	Trivediganj		Mustafabad
Mati	Rasoolabad		
Bahraich	Begumpur	Farrukhabad	Sankisa
	Bhaggarwa		Umarda
	Gambhirwa Bazar		Nawahaganj
	Khutahan		Rubain
	Laxman Nagar		Haseran
	Wautala		Kbimseपुरi
	Wazirganj		Vishungarh
	Sirsia		Jarari
	Indira Colony		Kharni
	Rishikesh-IDPL		Manimau
Dehradun	Swang Ashram	Ghaziabad	Sirauli
	Timly		Sanjay Nagar
	Maldevta		Mohan Nagar
	Shergarh		Indra Puram
	Nagthat		Vaiehalli
	Baddi		Chiranjiv Nagar
	Harawala		Gandhi Nagar
	Manduwala		Murad Nagar
	Dharmawala		Nandgram
	Lakhwar		Navyug Market (Nehru Nagar)

1	2	1	2
	Newari		Inghota
	Talheta		Biharika
	Marki		Chikasi
Gorakhpur	Jhangaha		Gundda
	Doharia Bazar		Lodhipur
	Khutaha Bazar		Tickrauli
Jhansi	Baryadwa Bazar		Dhanauri
	Pichhaur	Kanpur	Artara
	Ghasmandi		Jojmau
	Sipri		Jovind Nagar
	Bamore		Rooma Chakeri
	Bangara		Naramau
	Tehraulti		Bhauti Pratappur
	Narhat		Cantt
Banda	Jaspura		UPICA
	Mahua		Maithi
	Ram Nagar		Sajeti
	Markundi		Pali
	Chhiboo		Reona
	Murwal		Nauranga
	Jamalpur		Sendalpur
	Rasimpur		Chakeri Railway Station
	Gahwana		Baraur
	Inguwa Mau		Prempur
	Marka		Kanchausi
	Jari		Molasa
	Sabada		Sewa Khera
	Simdhal Kal		Bari Pal
	Gadaria		Seoli
	Joharpur		Kahivjhen
	Paprena		Gajner
	Bhadur Khar		Mangalpur
Hamirpur	Naraich		Ramaipur
	Khanna	Hainpuri	Dihull
	Bhaiswari		Mauner
	Beri		Kuchhera
	Tirha		Saman
	Mawaljar		Aurand
	Kundhari		Blichem
	Bidkokhan		Naviganj

	1	2		1	2
		Lambu			Chak
		Mustafabad			Hadurpur
		Nangalamagh			Singapur
		Madanpur			Karhahyaaba
		Jagatpur			Khirigaon
		Patera			Chotih
		Sultanganj		Fatehpur	Amauji
		Khargar			Vijaypur
		Jagir			Moni Gouti
Orai		Pindan			Kheharu
		Mahew			Ghiulaha
		Rampur			Janarwan
		Khaksis			Bhitaure
		Usaroon			Deemal
		Sahar		Unnao	Naisarai
		Chhan			Kalukhera
		Goha			Kurshar
		Hadoujar			Auras
		Damra			Rasoolabad
		Kalli			Kautha
		Birpus			Hilauli
		Sarses			Makhi
		Sirsaalar			Sikpwarosi
		Saraw			Asoha
		Chiripur			Mirzapur
		Jagmapur			Parlyar
		Jaisarkal			Bichhiya
		Piprat		Kotdwar	Baherakhal
		Keelac			Devikhet
		Said Nagar			Yamekeshwar
		Khsrn			Nainidanda
		Churki			Daurikhal
		Kararchand			Rikhnikhal
		K.K. Chera			Chilla
		Imila			Pokhra
Rae Bareilly		Godnanj			Darholi
		Aihu			Behwa Sengar
		Amara		Basti	Jamda Shahi
		Raj Fatehpur			Kaiser Bazar
		Bhojpur			Bankati
		Jehg			

1	2	1	2
Shahjahanpur	Nahli	Mathura	Neemgaon
	Basantpur		Rall
Hardoi	Tadyawan		Akosh
	Danwar		Beri
Gonda	Amdahai		Harnol
	Azad Nagar		Narisemri
Sitapur	Sanda		Karab
Lakhimpur	Chandan Chauki		Mal
Lucknow	Tikalt Rai Talab	Meerut	Bachcha Park
	Kumhrawan		Partapur
	Kahla		Nauchandi
	Ashiyana		Pochpeda
Mau	Maryadpur		Agwanpur
	Chakra		Kaithwari
	Dubari		Kirthuli
	Suggichauri		Kotana
	Sipah Idrahimabad		Nilohi
	Attersewan		Raghnathpur
	Kashmaur		Keera
	Heidherpur	Moradabad	Rehawati
	Piper Seth		Majhola
	Bhaluwani		Lajpat Nagar
	Madanpur		Sambhal Road
	Bhagalpur		Bania Khara
	Khukhundu		Bhagalpur Tanda
	Desni Deoria		Panwasa
	Bangara Bazar		Rehra (Gangeshwari)
	Kuber Asthan		Hakempur
	Nebuwa Nawrongia		Manota
	Tarya Sujan		Jatpura
	Motichak	Muzaffarnagar	Atrauli
	Semayur Bazar		Shatyan
	Helimpur		Jasala
	Markundi		Galibpur
Mirzapur	Kakrahi		Jolly
	Kherlya		Sikheda
	Babhanj		Baroda
	Windhamganj	Noida	Dungar
	Dramaganj		Noida Sect. 19
			Noida Sect. 62

	1	2		1	2
		Noida Sect. 32		Saharanpur	Chilkana Road
		Lakbiawagi			Noomaist Comp (SHW)
		Uclogaon			Todarpur
		Dhampur			Billyakhori
		Arania			Khanpur
		Pratapur			Piran Kaliyan
		Muni			Miragpur
		Bilaspur			Dudhala
		Ajayabpur			Jahanpur
		Mukimpur			Bahera Sandal Singh
		Jhajhar			Jaroda Panda
		Kharagwali		Uttarkashi	Rajgarhi
		Salarpur			Kharadi
		Geshpur			Dhanolti
		Bilsuri			Jaunpur
		Baral			Thaldour
		Narayanpur			Bilangana
		Ahmed Garh			Chaka (Tehri)
Nainital		Kaladhungi			Kantatal (Tehri)
		New Exchange-A		Varanasi	Sanjay Nagar
		New Exchange-B			Ilia
		New Exchange-C			Saidupur
		New Exchange-D			Viramkot
Pilibhit		Mudaling			Sahaganj
		Paribirg Basti			Dharauli
		Madhopur		Ballia	Berubarbari
		Intgaon			Husainabad
		Simraug			Kazipur
		Lolari			Kotwari
		Motiter			Monish
		Japla			Murlichhapra
		Mirori			Navanagar
		Larikhara			Sonwani
Rampur		Channruwa		Ghazipur	Bara
		Hero			Bara Chav
		Kuber Fern			Barthara
		Rampura			Bhavarcol
		Khata			Bimo
		Raisdandia			Deokali
		Rothkhara			Kasimaba

1	2
	Khardiha
	Manihori
	Nayakgih
	Parsavikal
	Raipur
	Saidabad
	Sohawal
Jaunpur	Hariharpur
	Nevadia
	Pali
	Patrahi Bazar
	Ratasi
	Sarai Bika
	Sambhugan
	Sitam Sar
Sultanpur	Akhandnagar
	Baldirai
	Bhadar
	Bhetwa
	Bhain
	Hanumanganj
	Shahgarh
	Wallipur
Pratapgarh	Baghari
	Gatani
	Atheha
	Dhakawa
	Magrowrara
	Kithgwar Bazar
	Dilippur
	Bhagwatganj
	Gaura Bazar
	Sahebganj
	Bihar
	Ahigawar
	Shivgarh
	Rajapur
	Sakardara
	Kusuwapur Bazar

*[English]***Supply of Power to Goa by NPGC**

718. SHRI RAVI SITARAM NAIK : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether due to transmission problems the National Power Grid Corporation is not supplying the power to Goa;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which Electricity Regulatory Commission is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) and (b) Goa receives Power from Western & Southern Regional Grids. Goa has been allocated 294 MW from Central Stations in WR and 100 MW from Ramagundam STPS in SR. Peak load of Goa is about 200 MW. The allocation from Central Stations is adequate to meet its full requirements. However, Goa is unable to draw its full share from the Western Region due to low voltage. There is no problem in supplying power to Goa and existing transmission lines to Goa have enough capacity. However, the supply of Power to Goa from the Grid is affected due to low voltage and weak sub-distribution & transmission system. Despite low voltage conditions Goa is facing no energy and peak power shortages.

(c) The Electricity Regulatory Commission's Ordinance was promulgated on 25.4.1998 for establishment of CERC and SERC for rationalisation of tariff and matter incidental thereto. The CERC/SERC are required to be constituted within a period of three months from the date of promulgation of the Ordinance. Necessary action for establishment of Central Regulatory Commissions has been initiated by Ministry of Power. The State Government have been requested to set up State Regulatory Commission within the stipulated period of three months.

*[Translation]***Smuggling of Skins of Tigers**

719. SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have conducted a survey to find out the number of different species of Tigers from various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the shortfall noticed in the number of these species and the steps proposed to be taken to increase their number; and

(d) whether there is large scale smuggling of the skins of Tigers and if so, the steps taken to check the smuggling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) There is only one species of tiger of which only one sub-species Royal Bengal Tiger (*Panthera tigris tigris*) is found in India. An All India Estimation is carried out once in four years to enumerate the population of tigers in the country. The State-wise

tiger population as per the past successive estimations are given in Statement-I.

(c) and (d) It is a fact that illegal trafficking of tiger parts and declining tiger population are major causes of concern and to protect the Indian tiger against renewed threats the Government has taken several measures which are enlisted Statement-II.

Statement-I
Population of Tigers in the Country

Name of the State	Tigers				
	1972	1979	1984	1989	1993
1. Tamil Nadu	033	065	097	095	097
2. Maharashtra	160	174	301	417	276
3. Kerala	060	134	089	045	057
4. West Bengal	073	296	352	353	335
5. Orissa	142	173	202	243	226
6. Karnataka	102	156	202	257	305
7. Bihar	085	110	138	157	137
8. Assam	147	300	376	376	325
9. Rajasthan	074	079	096	099	064
10. Madhya Pradesh	457	529	786	985	912
11. Uttar Pradesh	282	487	698	735	465
12. Andhra Pradesh	035	148	164	235	197
13. Meghalaya	032	035	125	034	053
14. Manipur	001	010	006	031	—
15. Tripura	007	006	005	—	—
16. Mizoram	—	065	033	018	028
17. Nagaland	080	102	104	104	083
18. Arunachal Pradesh	069	139	219	135	180
19. Sikkim	—	—	002	004	002
20. Gujarat	008	007	009	009	005
21. Goa Daman & Diu	—	—	—	002	003
22. Haryana	—	—	001	—	—
Total	1827	3015	4005	4334	3750

Statement-II

Steps Taken by the Government of India to Protect Tiger

1. The State Government have been advised to strengthen vigilance and intensify patrolling.
2. Training and Workshops of various enforcement agencies for effective intelligence gathering and law enforcement.
3. Setting up of a National Coordination Committee to control poaching and illegal trade in wildlife with enforcement agencies like Customs, Revenue Intelligence, Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Border

Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Coast Guards, State Police, Deputy Director, Wildlife Preservation & Scientific Organisations like Zoological and Botanical Survey of India.

4. To control transboundary trade, a protocol has been signed with People's Republic of China and a MOU with His Majesty's Government of Nepal.
5. Initiated creation of a Forum of Tiger Range Countries, i.e. Global Tiger Forum for addressing international issues related to tiger conservation.
6. Launching of public awareness programme to involve Non-Governmental Organisations and others

for supporting the Government in its efforts towards wildlife conservation.

7. Supporting programmes of Institutions and NGOs in exploiting tiger-trade routes and developing a forensic identification reference Manual for tiger parts and products.
8. Funds are being provided to the State Governments for the eco-development of the areas to reduce the biotic pressure thereon.
9. Steps are being initiated to set up site specific "Special Strike Force" in the Project Tiger areas.

[English]

Tehri Project

720. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government propose to review Tehri Project in Garhwal Hills keeping in view recent movement by the environment activists to stop construction; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) and (b) No, Sir, However, in view of several issues raised by Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna regarding safety aspects as well as environmental and rehabilitation issues, the Government had constituted a Group of Experts to review the safety aspect of Tehri Dam in June, 1996 and another Committee on rehabilitation and environmental issues in September, 1996. The reports of the two Committees have been received. Neither of the two committees have recommended stoppage of construction work. There is no proposal to stop construction work.

[Translation]

Privatisation of AIR/Doordarshan

721. SHRI AJIT JOGI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to allow private sector to set up Radio Station and Doordarshan Kendras in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) No Sir, there is no such proposal at present.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Amount for Dredging the National Water Ways

722. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the amount earmarked for the work relating to dredging of the national water ways during the current year;

(b) the time by which the work would be commenced and completed; and

(c) the details of connected works proposed to be undertaken alongwith dredging, if any?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) Rs. 4.30 crores

(b) Annual maintenance dredging in National Waterway-1 is expected to commence in early November, 1998 and continue till May, 1999. In National Waterway-3 the capital dredging work is scheduled to commence from middle of September, 1998 and is expected to be completed by June, 1999.

(c) On National Waterway-1 before dredging identification of shoals by talweg survey and detailed pre dredging surveys are conducted, using departmental dredger and survey vessels. On National Waterway-3 the works connected with dredging are acquisition of land for widening of the canal, bank protection, dry and wet soil excavation.

[Translation]

National Highways in M.P.

723. SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of National Highways in Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) the amount spent on them during last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) Total No. of National Highways (including 2 newly declared National Highways) in Madhya Pradesh is 11.

(b) Yearwise allocation of amount for development and maintenance, for the last three years, is as under :

(Rs. in lakh)

Year	Allocation of funds	
	Development	Maintenance & Repairs
1995-96	2020.00	1971.52
1996-97	1020.00	3176.72
1997-98	4000.00	3313.78

Filling up of Vacancies

724. SHRIMATI OMVATI DEVI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of E.D.D.A./M.S. and E.D.D.V./P.M. posts filled up in Darbhanga district of Madhya Pradesh from 1997 till date;

(b) whether the Government have received any representation against the violation of rules and regulation in making these appointments; and

(c) if so, the details of the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) There are no post of EDDA/MS and EDDV/PM under Department of posts. The number of posts of EDDA/MC and ED BPM filled up in the District of Darbhanga under Bihar Postal Circle from 1.1.97 till date is 28 (twenty eight).

(b) Yes Sir. Representations were received in 17 cases.

(c) Review of the 17 appointment cases revealed no irregularity in 16 cases. In the case regarding appointment to the post of ED MC at Bhoj Pandaul, it was found that a candidate second in the merit list as per marks, was appointed. A detailed enquiry has been ordered in this case.

Felling of Trees in the Khatti Dadar Forest Area

725. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Bharat Aluminium Ltd. (BALCO) set up at Mandla district of Madhya Pradesh was permitted for felling of remaining trees in block Sr. No. 4 in 1988 under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for mining in Khatti Dadar Forest area; and

(b) if so, the reasons for not giving permission for felling the remaining 289 trees on 1.25 hectare land in Forest block Sr. 6 area of Khatti Dadar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) The permission to fell the trees for mining in Sr. No. 4 Khatti Dadar forest area was granted by the State Forest Department without obtaining approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. For felling of trees from 1.25 ha. Forest land in Sr. no. 6 in Khatti Dadar forest land, a formal proposal in the prescribed format from State Government is necessary for approval of Central Government under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

Audit Paras Pending in PIB

726. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the details of audit paras pending in the Press Information Bureau for the last three years;

(b) the details of advance payments made to the officer of National Information Centre situated in the said office for the purchase of computers and its accessories for computerisation;

(c) whether audit has pointed out many irregularities in the said purchase; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and action taken against the officers concerned?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) One C&AC Para regarding investment in the purchase of Automatic Message Switching System made during 1991 by Press Information Bureau is included in its Report for the year ended 31.3.96.

(b) An amount of Rs. 97.52 lakhs was paid as an advance to National Informatics Centre in March, 1995 purchase of computers and its accessories.

(c) and (d) : No irregularities have been pointed out by the audit in the said purchase at (b) above.

[English]

Establishment of ITTs

727. SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up more Indian Institutes of Technology in the country particularly in the North-East;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) The Government have not taken any decision on setting up of more Indian Institutes of Technology in the country.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Such a decision can be taken only after considering all the relevant factors.

Drop in Forest Cover

728. SHRI SUBRATA MUKHERJEE :
 SHRI SUDHIR GIRI :
 SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA :
 SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG :
 DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Supreme Court on February 23, 1998 expressed grave concern over the alarming drop in dense forest cover in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether according to the Supreme Court 17,000 square kilometres of forests have vanished in two years from 1995-97 and the Centre and the defaulting States will have to explain the reasons for this decline;

(d) the steps, the Government propose to take to meet the warning issued by the Supreme Court; and

(e) the names of the defaulting States, besides Andhra Pradesh and the action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The recently published State of Forest Report, 1997, presents the dynamics of the forest cover of the country based on the satellite data of 1993-95. According to this report, there has been an overall reduction of 5,482 square kilometres as compared to 1995 assessment. However, there has been a reduction of 17,777 square kilometres of the dense forest cover. The Supreme Court has directed the defaulting States to explain the position of their respective States with regard to the deforestation.

(d) and (e) The Ministry has requested the concerned State/UT Governments to take serious note of the depletion of forest cover and to make an in-depth analysis of the factors contributing to the depletion of forest cover, to evolve effective strategy and action programme for arresting the trend so as to increase the forest cover in the coming years. Ministry has also requested Planning Commission and all State/UT Governments for increasing the allocation for forestry sector. Besides Andhra Pradesh the other States in which forest cover has decreased as per State of Forest report, 1997 are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Orissa and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Siphoning off of Funds

729. SHRI SUDHIR GIRI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been

drawn to the news-item captioned "Many private schools siphoned off huge sums" appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated March 16, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government of N.C.T. of Delhi have informed that on receipt of complaints from Parents, Parents Teachers-Associations and reports in the Press, a Special Inspection of 16 schools was conducted as per the provisions of Delhi School Education Act, 1973. Inspection Reports revealed that additional funds collected by these schools have been utilised in violation of provisions of Delhi School Education Act and Rules, 1973. Consequently, directions were issued under relevant provisions of Delhi School Education Act, 1973 by the Director of Education to all unaided recognised schools to regulate the collection of fees and funds by the management. This order was stayed by the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi vide its interim order dated 11.12.1997 and the Court permitted the unaided schools to enhance the fee which they were charging on 31.3.1997 by a maximum of 40% with effect from 1.4.1997 till the disposal of writ petitions.

During the period of regular hearing of the petitions, the academic session ended on 31.3.1998 and most of the unaided schools enhanced the fees with effect from 1.4.1998 without any express permission of the Hon'ble Court. This step of unaided schools has been challenged by the Abhibhawak Mahasangh and the Hon'ble Court heard the said petition on 4.5.1998 and reiterated its order dated 11.12.1997. The matter is still sub-judice.

[Translation]

Subsidy to Farmers in Power Sector

730. KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether subsidy provided to farmers in Power Sector is being withdrawn by the Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to compensate farmers in any other way; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

[English]

Regional Language Programmes/Films on Doordarshan

731. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether Doordarshan Channel-1 has completely stopped not only Regional language feature films but also all other Cultural programmes in different regional languages;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to reconsider the telecast of feature films and other cultural programmes in regional languages;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) and (b) In the revised pattern of transmission made by Prasar Bharati on DD-1, regional language films have been stopped on DD-1 in afternoon transmission to accommodate them in the regional transmission from regional centres. This was done to enhance viewership of afternoon programmes on regional network and regional language films on regional channels. However, cultural programmes from different regions continue to be telecast on national network.

(c) and (d) To telecast regional language feature films on Doordarshan, new guidelines/criteria are being formulated for the purpose.

(e) Does not arise.

Reforms in Power Sector

732. DR. Y.S. RAJASEKARA REDDY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the reforms proposed to be undertaken in power sector by the Government;

(b) whether any decision has been taken to restructure all the electricity boards; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) It is proposed to set up Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) at the national level and State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) in the States for rationalisation of tariff and matters related thereto. Steps have also been taken to expedite completion of on-going projects. Improve the efficiency of existing units and encourage flow of private investment with the power sector. State Governments have also been urged to improve the

working of State Electricity Boards and the distribution system.

(b) and (c) The decision regarding restructuring of the State Electricity Boards is required to be taken by the State Governments; Orissa is the first State which has introduced reforms in their power sector by enactment of Orissa Electricity Reforms Act, 1995. Similarly, Haryana has also enacted Haryana Electricity Reforms Act, 1998 recently. The other State which have initiated action to undertake reforms and restructuring in their power sector are Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam and Goa.

Construction of Kendriya Vidyalayas Buildings

733. SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether buildings for all the Kendriya Vidyalayas in the country have been constructed;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the time by which the buildings of the remaining Kendriya Vidyalayas are likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) has informed that KVS is responsible for construction of 708 buildings for schools. This excludes Project Schools/Schools located in Institutions of Higher learning. Out of 708, 353 school buildings have been constructed. The break-up status of remaining 355 schools is as under :

Buildings under Construction	83
Buildings under Planning	117
Land yet to be transferred by sponsoring agencies	155

The construction of remaining buildings will depend upon availability of land and funds.

Telecast of Features of Netaji Centenary

734. SHRIMATI KRISHNA BOSE : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to telecast special features to celebrate the end Netaji Centenary;

(b) if so, whether the Government have plans to produce a feature on the special relationship between Rabindranath Tagore and Netaji Subhash Chandra; and

(c) if so, the plans of the Government to produce a documentary on Netaji Research Bureau, the Institute

housed in Netaji's ancestral home in Calcutta which is the storehouse of all documents on Netaji?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Doordarshan has planned to produce a programme on Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta.

Promotion in IRCC

735. SHRI MAHESH KANODIA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the details of suggestions/letters given to IRCC Board/Management by L.O. for SC/ST IRCC before regularising irregular promotions and deservicing reserved points for the period 1991-93;

(b) the action taken on the said letters and Para 5th (Annexure-V) of Mittal Report by IRCC/Board before clearing the same;

(c) the instructions/directions issued by National Commission for SC/ST on January 29, 1998 to IRCC;

(d) the reasons for not implementing the O.M. 36011/12/81 Est (SCT) dated November 10, 1980 during 1991-93 inspite of SC/ST Association's demand; and

(e) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

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

Rehabilitation of Tribals form Nagarhole National Park

736. SHRI A. SIDDARAJU : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the details of tribals living inside Nagarhole National Park in Karnataka;

(b) whether the Karnataka Government had sent any proposal for Rs. 43.50 lakh assistance to shift them to some other place and for taking up rehabilitation programme; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) According to the information received from the Government of Karnataka there are about 1450 tribal families living in 48 hamlets located inside and on the fringes of Nagarhole National Park.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. A proposal to shift and rehabilitate 50 tribal families was received from the

Karnataka Government during 1997-98 and accordingly, the Union Government having sanctioned the total amount of Rs. 43.50 lakhs has released Rs. 25.00 lakhs as the first instalment under its 'Beneficiary Oriented Scheme for Tribal Development'.

[Translation]

Stadia in M.P.

737. SHRI V.K. KHANDELWAL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of stadia constructed in Madhya Pradesh so far with the help of Central assistance;

(b) the number of stadia under construction; and

(c) the amount likely to be provided this year to complete the stadia under construction?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) Nine stadia have been constructed so far and twenty-one projects are under construction in Madhya Pradesh with assistance from the Central Government.

(c) As per the provisions of the Central Scheme, grants are released to the State Governments/UTs on fulfilment of certain conditions stipulated in the sanction. No specific earmarking of funds during each financial year is made. As such, release of grant during this year will depend on the progress on reports on the relevant projects to be sent by the State Government.

Development Projects in M.P.

738. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the details of the development works decided to be executed in the field of Telecommunication and postal sector in Madhya Pradesh during the current financial year;

(b) whether some of the works started in the country in the current financial year are incomplete; and

(c) if so, the details with the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) The details of development works decided to be executed in the field of Telecommunication and Postal sector in Madhya Pradesh during the current financial year (1998-99) are given in Statement-I and Statement-II.

(b) and (c) The development works taken up so far during current financial year 1998-99 in Telecommunication and Postal sector are likely to be completed by 31.3.1999 during the Annual plan period.

Statement-I

The details of important development works in Telecommunication planned in Madhya Pradesh during the current financial year (1998-99) are as under

S.No.	Name of Item	Annual Plan Target for 1998-99
1.	Net Switching Capacity	1,25,000 Lines
2.	Direct Exchange Lines	1,10,000 Numbers
3.	TAX Capacity (Net)	23,500 lines

Statement-II

The details of the development works decided to be executed in the field of Postal sector in Madhya Pradesh during the current financial year

1. Installation of 30 multi-purpose counter machines and 06 Savings Bank local area network machines is envisaged.
2. 150 electronic Franking machines and 20 Stamp Cancelling machines are also expected to be installed in the country.
3. On-going projects in respect of construction of postal buildings and staff quarters are the priority for the current year. No new projects have been taken up during the current year.
4. The Department has set a target for opening 2 Departmental Sub Post Offices, 50 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices and to provide Infrastructural equipments to 175 Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices during current financial year.

[English]

Delay in Completion of Calicut Bye-pass

739. SHRI P. SANKARAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

- (a) the reasons for the inordinate delay in completing the Calicut Bye-pass of National Highway;
- (b) whether the Government have fixed any tentative date for the completion of this work; and
- (c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) The proposed Calicut (Kozhikode) bypass on NH-17 is to be tackled in 4 phases having a total length of 28.124 Km. starting from Vengalam and ending at Ramanattukara. Land Acquisition for Phase I (Patheerankavu to Ramanattukara) having a length of 7.254 Km., Phase II from Vengalam to Malaparamba 11.760 Km. and Phase IV from Malaparamba to Kottull

2.74 Km. have been completed. Land Acquisition for Phase III from Kottull to Pantheerankavu for 6.370 Km. is in progress. Project estimate for construction of 7.254 Kms. from Pantheerankavu to Ramanattukara coming under Phase I have been sanctioned by Government of India in June '97 for Rs. 25.54 crores (including roads & bridges).

(b) and (c) Works for both roads and bridges are in progress. The target date for completion of Phase I is December, 2000. The bypass as a whole can be completed in phases, after the remaining works are sanctioned depending upon the availability of funds.

Kendriya Vidyalaya in Hospet, Karnataka

740. SHRI H.G. RAMULU : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government have opened a Kendriya Vidyalaya in Hospet, Karnataka;
- (b) if so, the funds sanctioned so far for the construction of Vidyalaya's building alongwith the estimated cost of construction thereof;
- (c) the time by which the construction work is likely to be completed;
- (d) the number of teachers working in the Vidyalaya and the number of such post lying vacant separately at present;
- (e) the intake capacity for different classes in the Vidyalaya, class-wise; and
- (f) whether the Government propose to increase the intake capacity of the Vidyalaya and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Vidyalaya was opened in 1997-98. No funds have been sanctioned so far since the plot of 8.5 acres of land earmarked at the time of opening of the Vidyalaya has not yet been transferred in favour of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) by the State Government.

(d)

Post	Sanctioned strength	No. of teachers working	Vacant Posts
T.G.T.	02	NII	02
PRT	06	03	03
Music Teacher	01	NII	01
Librarian	01	NII	01

(e) The intake capacity for each section is 35. However, the children/grand children of Hon'ble MPs' children of KVS employees, Ministry of External Affairs and intelligence agencies, etc. are admitted over and above the strength.

(f) No, Sir.

Electronic Telephone Exchange in J & K

741. VAIDYA VISHNU DATT : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of electronic telephone exchanges functioning in Jammu and Kashmir till date, district-wise;

(b) whether the Government are aware that these exchanges are not functioning properly;

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Government propose to modernise these exchanges to minimise faults and provide uninterrupted communication facilities to the people;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the number of manual telephone exchanges proposed to be converted into electronic exchanges during 1998-99?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) The number of electronic exchanges functioning in J&K district-wise are as below :

(i) Anantnag	-10
(ii) Badgam	-08
(iii) Baramulla	-12
(iv) Pulwama	-10
(v) Kupwara	-05
(vi) Srinagar	-08
(vii) Jammu	-47
(viii) Kathua	-22
(ix) Doda	-26
(x) Udhampur	-30 (35)
(xi) Poonch	-17
(xii) Rajouri	-26
(xiii) Leh	-14
(xiv) Kargil	-06
Total	-246

(b) and (c) Exchanges are generally working satisfactorily. However, performance is sometimes adversely effected due to very difficult law and order situation and militancy in the state.

(d) and (e) The exchanges have already been modernised. However, it is planned to modernise the connectivity by providing digital transmission media progressively. The details of such exchanges are given below :

1. Magam
2. Kulgam
3. Achabal
4. Malangpura
5. Trai
6. Chandoor
7. Narbal
8. Jajarkotli
9. Lakhanpur
10. Trilokpur
11. Tikri
12. Thathri
13. Mahore
14. Latti
15. Surankote
16. Nawchera
17. Donglbrahmna
18. Dharmari
19. Arnas
20. Nyoma
21. Nimoo
22. Saspole
23. Sukarbacman
24. Mandi

(f) There is no manual exchange working in J&K.

[Translation]

Doordarshan Kendra in Karnataka

742. SHRI BASWARAJ PATIL SEDAM : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the location and date on which first ever Doordarshan Kendra in Karnataka State was commissioned and aim thereof;

(b) whether the present studio and its equipments are suitable to meet the present requirements;

(c) if not, the scheme for its modernisation and development during the current year; and

(d) the extent of shortage of employees therein and the time by which this shortage is likely to be made good?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) The first Doordarshan Kendra (comprising of studio and 1KW High Power Transmitter) was commissioned on 19.11.1983 at Bangalore in Karnataka with the objective to provide information, entertainment and education of the region.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The extent of shortage of employees in Doordarshan Kendra, Bangalore is limited to the requirement of HPT meant for DD-2. The number is approximately 20. While it may not be possible to specify a time limit for meeting the shortage, the Kendra is being run with the available staff.

Power Generation Plan

743. SHRI DATTA MEGHE :

SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the total requirement and generation of power in the country;

(b) whether the Government have any comprehensive plan to increase generation of power;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which the plan is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) As on April, 1998, the total peak requirement of power and peak met in the country is 64822 MW and 56252 MW respectively.

(b) to (d) To fulfil the demand for power supply, the following acting plan has been contemplated as per the draft Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) :

- (i) Early completion of the on-going projects.
- (ii) Maximisation of benefits from the existing plants by improving the plant Load Factor (PLF).
- (iii) Reducing the Transmission and Distribution losses.
- (iv) Rationalisation of electricity tariff;
- (v) Establishment of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) at Centre and State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERC) at State level.
- (vi) Demand management and energy conservation measures by different end-users.

[English]

Vacancies in Kendriya Vidyalayas, Hyderabad Region

744. SHRI M. RAJIAH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of PGT posts lying vacant at present in different subjects in Kendriya Vidyalayas of Hyderabad Region, school-wise and subject-wise;

(b) whether these vacancies are likely to be filled in before August, 1998, and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of proposals, if any, to start new Kendriya Vidyalayas in Hyderabad region?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) There are six vacancies of PGT in Kendriya Vidyalayas of Hyderabad Region as given below :-

Subject	School	No. of vacancies
English	K.V. Vijayawada	1
	K.V. Gooty	1
Hindi	K.V. Machlipatnam	1
Sanskrit	K.V. Picket, Secundrabad	1
Maths	K.V. Machlipatnam	1
Computer Sc.	K.C. Kanchanbagh, Hyderabad	1
Total		6

(b) Process to fill up the vacancies has already been initiated. It is expected that vacancies will be filled before August, 1998.

(c) There is no such proposal.

Cleaning of Major Rivers

745. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government has any scheme to clean the major rivers of South India; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government has approved the National River Conservation Plan (NRCP) to improve the water quality of 18 major rivers of the country including those

of South India, in July, 1995 at a cost of Rs. 772.08 crore to be shared equally by the Central and State Governments. The Action Plan involves the setting up of sewage treatment plants, sewage interception and diversion works, low cost toilets, improved wood based

crematoria, river front development facilities, afforestation schemes and programmes for public participation. It is scheduled for completion by March, 2005. The details of NRCP towns of South India are given in the Statement.

Statement

Town-wise estimated cost of National River Conservation Plan in South India

(Rupees in Lakhs)

S.No.	Name of Town	River	CCEA Cost	Sanctioned DPR Cost (31.3.98)	Fund Released	
					GOI (31.3.98)	State (31.3.97)
Andhra Pradesh						
1.	Mancharial	Godavari	478.72	178.52		
2.	Bhadrachalam	Godavari	308.00	155.06		
3.	Rajamundry	Godavari	2516.00	10.86.36		
4.	Ramagundam	Godavari	2076.00	77.68		
State Total			5378.72	1497.62	581.31	373.80
Karnataka						
5.	Shimoga	Tunga	747.62	88.43		
6.	Harlhora	Tunga Bhadra	260.69	125.81		
7.	Bhadravati	Bhadra	482.80	120.56		
8.	Davanagere	Tunga Bhadra	673.17	231.68		
9.	Krnagar	Cauvery	84.56	17.91		
10.	Kollegal	Cauvery	74.48	17.60		
11.	Nanjangud	Cauvery	183.96	151.30		
12.	Sri Rangapatna	Cauvery	192.71	129.50		
State Total			2699.99	882.80	204.72	239.06
Tamilnadu						
13.	Kumarapalayam	Cauvery	624.00	186.02		
14.	Bhawani	Cauvery	368.00	77.29		
15.	Erode	Cauvery	1569.00	789.21		
16.	Trichy	Cauvery	690.00	273.68		
17.	Pallipalayam	Cauvery	569.00	186.16		
State total			3820.00	1512.37	195.35	268.70
Grand Total			11898.71	3892.79	981.38	880.58

[Translation]

Target for Electrification in Villages

746. SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the target fixed for the electrification of villages in Madhya Pradesh during Eighth Five Year Plan and the achievements made in this regard;

(b) the programme of electrification in the villages of Madhya Pradesh during the Ninth Five Year plan ;

(c) the time by which all the villages would be electrified; and

(d) the parameter fixed by the Government for the electrification in rural areas?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) There was a target for electrification of 1920 villages in Madhya Pradesh under REC programmes during the 8th Five Year Plan (1992-93 to 1996-97). against which Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board had reported electrification of 3278 villages.

(b) The Planning Commission is yet to finalize the programme for rural electrification for the 9th Five Year Plan.

(c) and (d) Rural Electrification is a continuing process and the remaining villages in Madhya Pradesh will be electrified in the Ninth and subsequent Five Year Plans depending upon generation capacity, the transmission and distribution facilities in the State and other relevant inputs.

Literacy Rate

747. SHRI BHASKARRAO PATIL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the details regarding schemes being implemented at present for the spread of literacy in the country ;

(b) the percentage increase in the literacy rate registered during the years 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 respectively;

(c) the target fixed in regard to raising the literacy rate during the year 1997-98; and

(d) the literacy rate by the end of 1996, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) The Total Literacy Campaign, based on the spirit of voluntarism, is the principal strategy of the National Literacy Mission for eradication of illiteracy in the country. As of date 442 districts have been covered under Total Literacy campaign, 229 districts under Post Literacy Campaigns and 59 districts under Continuing Education Programme. Voluntary agencies are supported for taking up innovative literacy projects in small pockets. Centre-based Rural Functional Literacy Projects are also implemented in Jammu & Kashmir, Sikkim and North-Eastern States which have difficult terrain.

(b) to (d) : The literacy data in the country is collected through decennial Census operations. Literacy rates of various States in the country on the basis of the 1991 Census are available. Subsequent increase in literacy rates will be known only after results of the next Census are available. No Year-wise target for increase in the literacy rate has been fixed by the National Literacy Mission.

[English]

LPTS/VLPTS in Orissa

748. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the places identified for installation of LPTs and VLPTs in Rural areas of Orissa State during the

year 1996-97 and 1997-98 and the work completed so far;

(b) the priority accorded for LPTs and VLPTs in Tribal Districts of Orissa; and

(c) the policy formulated by the Government for coverage of the remote and tribal areas of Central India, Tribal belts and North East States?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) A statement is enclosed.

(b) and (c) Doordarshan's constant endeavour has been to expand/upgrade its services throughout the country including remote, hilly, tribal, border and North Eastern States, in a phased manner, keeping in view factors such as suitability of location, availability of infrastructural facilities, extent of resultant coverage and relative priorities. There are 41 LPTs/VLPTs existing in the tribal sub-plan districts of Orissa and 17 LPTs/VLPTs are under implementation in these districts.

Statement

Locations of LPTs/VLPTs under implementation in Orissa State including Rural and Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) areas and those completed and commissioned during 1996-97 and 1997-98.

LPTs

Kotpad (TSP)	Commissioned during 1996-97
Kabisuryanagar (TSP)	- do -
Umerkote (TSP)	- do -
Sohela (TSP)	- do -
Sonepur	- do -
Mohana (TSP)	Installation completed 1997-98
Gondiya (Kapilas)	- do -
Padua (TSP)	- do -
Patnagarh	- do -
Simiguda (TSP)	- do -
Nayagarh	Under implementation
Tushara/Sainthele	- do -
Birmitrapur (TSP)	- do -
Khariar (TSP)	- do -
Karanjia (TSP)	- do -
Kulad	- do -
Rajgangapur (TSP)	- do -
Jaipara	- do -
Chikti	- do -

VLPTS

Nayagarh	Commissioned during 1996-97	
Thoumal Rampur (TSP)	- do -	
Bada Barbil (TSP)	- do -	
Nagchi	Commissioned during 1997-98	
Aud	Installation completed during 1997-98	
Kotampur (TSP)	- do -	
Koksara (TSP)	- do -	
Chitlakonde (TSP)	- do -	
Paikamal	Under implementation	
Sukinda	- do -	
Udaigiri	- do -	
Simlipalgarh (TSP)	- do -	
Jayapatna (TSP)	- do -	
Lan Jigarh (TSP)	- do -	
Kashipur (TSP)	- do -	
Machhkund (TSP)	- do -	

Procedure to start Power Projects

749. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated any simplified procedure to start Power Projects by way of giving more power to States and decentralising the cumbersome procedures; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In exercise of the Power conferred by sub-section (1) of Section 29 of the Electricity (Supply) Act, 1948 (54 of 1948), the Central Government has fixed the limit of Rs. 1000 crores to a scheme for a generating station prepared by a Generating Company and selected through a process of competitive bidding by the competent Government or Governments, as the sum of capital expenditure exceeding which the scheme shall be submitted to Central Electricity Authority for its concurrence. Through this notification, Power has been given to the State to clear power projects costing upto Rs. 1000 crores which have been selected through the process of international competitive biddings.

Besides the above, some of the steps taken by the Government for decentralising the procedure for clearance of private power projects, *inter-alia*, include;

- minimising the role of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board by according automatic

approval for foreign equity in selected categories.

- delegating more powers for environmental clearance to State Governments.

Purchase of Power

750. SHRI S.S. OWAISI :

SHRI K.P. NAIDU :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have finally agreed to purchase power from Pakistan and exchange of power between West Bengal and Bangladesh;

(b) if so, the rate and quantum of power likely to be purchased from Pakistan annually;

(c) the number of years for which the agreement for the purchase of power has been reached;

(d) whether the offer for sale of power was made by Pakistan through international financial institutions;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the expenditure likely to be incurred on the arrangements of power transmission from Pakistan?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (f) The Pakistan High Commission, in May 1997 conveyed to the Government of India that the Government of Pakistan is considering a proposal to export electricity to India and sought technical details on the grid system in India. In response, Government of India conveyed its interest in the proposal in June, 1997 and suggested that technical, commercial and administrative issues should first be examined by a team of experts from India and Pakistan. The Government of India had offered to send a team of experts to Pakistan. Alternatively, it was suggested that the Government of Pakistan may depute an expert team to India. There has been no further progress in the matter.

[Translation]

Demand and Supply of Power

751. SHRI JAYSINHJI CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the total number of power plants functioning in Gujarat at present;

(b) whether any plan has been formulated to enhance the capacity of power generation in the State during the current financial year;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) As on 31.03.1998, 19 power projects including 3 in the Central Sector were functioning in the Gujarat State.

(b) and (c) Details of power projects targetted for commissioning in the Gujarat State during the current financial year are given below :-

S.No.	Name of the project	Capacity (MW)
1.	Kadana H.E. Extn.	60
2.	Wanakbori TPS U-7	210
3.	Paguthan ST U-1	250
4.	Surat Lignite U-1	125

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Electronic Telephone Exchange in Assam

752. DR. JAYANTA RONGPI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the District Headquarters and Sub-divisional Headquarters of Assam are having electronic telephone exchange with STD facility;

(b) if not, the number of places not having this facility alongwith reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to provide electronic exchanges with STD facility there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir, All the 23 District Headquarters and 40 Subdivisional Headquarters in Assam are having electronic telephone exchanges with STD facility.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Demand and Supply of Power in A.P.

753. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Andhra Pradesh will get 425 MW of power from Orissa;

(b) if so, whether any agreement in this regard was signed between Talcher Super Thermal Power Project Stage II of the National Thermal Power Corporation and the State Electricity Board;

(c) the extent to which it will reduce the demand of the State Government;

(d) whether this has reduced the disruption in power supply in various parts of the State; and

(e) if so, the extent to which normalcy of power supply in Andhra Pradesh has been achieved?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (e) A Power purchase agreement has been signed between NTPC and Andhra Pradesh State Electricity Board (APSEB) on the 6th April, 1998 envisaging supply of 425 MW of power from Talcher Super Thermal Power Project Stage II (4 x 500 MW) proposed to be set up by NTPC in the State of Orissa in the 10th Plan.

However, an allocation of 150 MW of power has been made to APSEB from the existing stations of NTPC located in the Eastern Region. APSEB received about 122 Million Units of energy from the Central Stations of Eastern Region during April 1998 which helped in reducing the shortage of power in Andhra Pradesh.

Mitigating losses caused by Cyclones

754. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether 176 cyclones struck the country since 1891;

(b) if so, whether nearly 60 cyclones out of these had struck the A.P. Coast; and

(c) if so, the details of the measures being taken/contemplated to mitigate the damages of this natural calamity?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) A total of 311 Cyclones Storms crossed Indian Coasts from 1891 till date.

(b) 67 Cyclones struck Andhra Pradesh Coast during the above period.

(c) Government are aware that Andhra Pradesh coast is vulnerable to the cyclones. Therefore, a Cyclone Warning Centre has been functioning at Visakhapatnam since 1973. The Andhra Pradesh Coast is covered with two high power Cyclone Detection Radars exclusively to monitor cyclones: one at Machilipatnam and other at Visakhapatnam. The India Meteorological Department remains in close touch with the State Government authorities and other agencies and the warnings are transmitted through print and electronic media. In addition, help of other communication channels such as Police Wireless is taken to ensure that the warnings reach the designated users in time. The Cyclone Warning messages are disseminated in local languages directly to the people living in the areas likely to be affected by cyclone through INSAT based Cyclone Warning Dissemination System (CWDS). Andhra Pradesh coast is covered by 82 CWDS.

Issuing of Telephone Directories

755. SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA
SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether telephone directories have not been issued in Delhi, Gujarat and some other cities of various States for the last more than two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for the delay in issue of telephone directories; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that telephone directories and their corrigendas are issued in proper time?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Telephone Directories for Delhi and Surat, Junagarh, Valsad and Godhra in Gujarat State could not be published during the last 2 years.

(c) and (d) Printing of directories is a continuous process. Efforts are made by the circles/SSAS Heads to publish the telephone directories as early as possible. This, however depends on various factors such as availability of Contractor, number of lines added since publication of the last directory etc; wherever there is abnormal delay in publishing the directory, through the contractor, efforts are made to print the same departmentally.

[Translation]

Telephones Out of Order

756. SHRI JANARDAN PRASAD MISRA :
SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHARI :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a large number of complaints regarding the telephones being out of order are received in different parts of the country :

(b) if so, despite making complaints about non-functioning of the telephones, the complaints remain unattended and these are shown off as disposed of without making the telephone functional property;

(c) if so, the action proposed to be taken by the Government against such officers; and

(d) the manner in which the Government propose to solve the problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA): (a) No Sir, although complaints are received, but on average they are about 2 to 3 complaints per subscriber in a year.

(b) The complaints are closed after restoring the service and putting the telephone under operation.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

(d) Following steps are being taken to augment and streamline the fault repair services :

(i) Computerisation of fault repair service.

(ii) Use of modern testing instruments for localising and rectifying the fault on telephone cables and other accessories.

(iii) Most of the exchanges in the country and the Transmission media have been upgraded to state-of-the-art digital electronic version. Now most of the faults are in the external plant network. Following main steps are being taken to upgrade and modernise the external plant :

(1) Replacement of overhead alignments by under ground cables.

(2) Use of insulated wire/dropwire in place of bare iron wire.

(3) Remote Line Units (RLUs) exchanges are being opened to reduce cable conductors lengths in local loop in out door plant network.

(4) Upgradation of (pillers and D.Ps. etc.) by laying by the cables in Ducts.

(5) Replacement of fault prone under ground cables by Jelly Filled Cables.

(6) Introduction of OFC and WILL System.

[English]

Directorate of Field Publicity Units in Kerala

757. SHRI A.C. JOS : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the locations of Directorate of Field Publicity units in Kerala;

(b) whether Union Government have any proposal to set up new such units in any district of the State;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS. (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) The requisite details are given in the attached Statement.

(b) to (d) There is no approved proposal at present to set up a new Field Unit in Kerala. Further augmentation of field network of Directorate of Field

Publicity in the country, including the State of Kerala, would depend upon availability of resources.

Statement

Location-wise list of Field Publicity Units in the State of Kerala

S.No.	Location
1.	Alleppey
2.	Cannanore
3.	Ernakulam
4.	Malappuram
5.	Kottayam
6.	Kozhikode
7.	Palghat
8.	Trichur
9.	Thiruvananthapuram
10.	Quilon
11.	Wynad

Newspapers Published from Gujarat

758. SHRI C.D. GAMIT : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received applications for publishing and starting daily newspapers, weeklies, monthlies etc. from the State of Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of such newspapers given permission and registered during the last two years; and

(d) the criteria, rules and regulations for the grant of permission and registration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI) : (a) and (b) : Titles are verified by the Registrar of Newspapers for India for publication and starting of daily newspapers, periodicals etc. 691 and 720 applications for title verification were received from Gujarat during the calendar year 1996 and 1997 respectively.

(c) The details of titles cleared and registration of newspapers/periodicals done during the years is as under :

Year	Titles cleared	Newspapers/periodicals registered
1996	407	78
1997	490	171

(d) Registration of newspapers/periodicals and title clearance are done in accordance with the provisions contained in Section 5 and Section 6 of Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867.

Private Sector participation in Power Generation

759. SHRI DOWARKA PARSHAD BAIRWA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have identified the State for allowing Private Sector participation in power generation;

(b) if so, the criteria adopted for identifying these States;

(c) the number of proposals received in this regard and number of pending proposals; and

(d) the names of the States given priority and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a), (b) and (d) : The policy of Government of India for private participation in the power sector applies equally to all the States. The criteria adopted for deciding on the location of a power project in a State is determined keeping in view certain essential techno-economic details such as distance from source of fuel, transportation of fuel, water availability, feasibility of establishing the project from environmental and forest aspects, feasibility of power evacuation to the Load centres, etc.

(c) Government of India is monitoring 126 proposals that were received by State Governments for setting up of power projects in the private sector. These include 95 proposals on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)/ Letter of Intent (LoI), etc. route costing above Rs. 100 crores and 31 proposals on the competitive bidding route costing more than 1000 crores. As on April 30, 1998, Central Electricity Authority (CEA) has accorded techno-economic clearance to 41 projects for which complete Detailed Project Reports (DPRs) had been received. The DPRs in respect of 10 more projects received in CEA will be taken up for techno-economic appraisal after the requisite clarifications are received from the project promoters.

Demand and Supply of Power

760. SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any detailed study has been undertaken regarding the increasing demand of power in the States during the forthcoming plan;

(b) if so, the action plan contemplated to fulfill the demand of power supply;

(c) whether the Government have assessed the agricultural, industrial and domestic consumption of power in the States separately;

(d) whether the Ministry has requested to the Planning Commission to make additional allocation of funds in the field of power production; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the commission thereto?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir. The 15th Power Survey Committee was constituted in March, 1994 to review the electricity demand projections in details upto 2001-2002 and to project the perspective demand upto 2011-12.

(b) As per the draft Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002), following action plan has been contemplated to fulfill the demand for power supply.

- (i) Early completion of the on-going projects.
- (ii) Maximisation of benefits from the existing plants by improving the Plant Load Factor (PLF).
- (iii) Reducing the Transmission & Distribution losses.
- (iv) Rationalisation of electricity tariff.
- (v) Establishment of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) at Centre and State Electricity Regulatory Commission (SERC) at States level.
- (vi) Demand management and energy conservation measures by different end-users.

(c) The 15th Electricity Power Survey Committee has assessed the agricultural, industrial and domestic consumption of power in the States separately upto 2001-02.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The Ninth Plan programme and outlay therefor for the power sector is yet to be finalised by the Planning Commission.

[English]

LPT at Nanpara, Bahrach (U.P.)

761. SHRI ARIF MOHAMMED KHAN : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received complaints about the LPT at Nanpara District, Bahrach U.P. not functioning for the required hours; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to improve the functioning of Nanpara LPT?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) This has been brought to the notice of Prasar Bharati Board which has to take necessary steps to improve the functioning of Nanpara LPT.

[Translation]

Clearance to Renkota Reservoir

762. DR. MAHANT CHARAN DAS : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a proposal relating to clearance of the Renkota reservoir located at Bilaspur, Madhya Pradesh has been pending with the Government; and

(b) if so, the time by which the clearance would be accorded to this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) A proposal for diversion of 51.015 ha. of forest land under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for construction of Renkota Tank Project in district Bilaspur has been received from the State Government of Madhya Pradesh. The proposal is under active consideration for final decision, which will be taken shortly.

[English]

Cooperation with Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan

763. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to establish cooperation with Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan in the field of power;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the States likely to be benefited as a results thereof of the cooperation?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) The status of exchange of power with Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan is as follows :

1. **Bangladesh.** Consequent to the discussion regarding exchange of power between India and Bangladesh at various levels, the two Governments have agreed to prepare a joint feasibility report for interconnection of power systems between Bangladesh and India with Power-Grid Corporation of India Ltd. being authorised to prepare the feasibility report from the Indian side. The Asian Development Bank has agreed to finance a feasibility study for exchange of power between India and Bangladesh under its Regional Technical Assistance Programme. A Tripartite Meeting had been held at ADB, Manila on 29th and 30th May, 1997 regarding the Project. The project envisages export of surplus power from Eastern Region of India to Western

Bangladesh. The project also envisages export of surplus power from Eastern Bangladesh to the North-Eastern Region of India. Initially, this would be of benefit to States belonging to the Eastern and the North-Eastern regions of India and once all the links of the National Grid are complete, the benefit could extend to the country as a whole.

2. **Nepal.** The power exchange between India and Nepal commenced in October, 1971 following Secretary level discussions between the two countries. The quantum of exchange of power initially was upto 5 MW which at present has been raised to 50 MW. the exchange of power takes place at 17 places along the Indo-Nepal border through the existing transmission network. The Mahakali Treaty between Government of India and Nepal provides that Nepal shall have the right to receive 70 million units of energy on a continuous basis, free of cost, from the date of coming into force of the Treaty. For this purpose India is required to construct a 132 KV transmission line upto Mahendra Nagra, Nepal on the Indo-Nepal Border from the Tanakpur Power Station. The transmission line will be constructed by Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd. An Umbrella agreement between India and Nepal has also been initiated in February, 1996 opening the entry of private sector in the exchange of power between the two countries.
3. **Pakistan.** The Pakistan High Commission, in May, 1997 conveyed to the Government of India that the Government of Pakistan is considering a proposal to export electricity to India and sought technical details on the grid system in India. In response, Government of India conveyed its interest in the proposal in June, 1997 and suggested that technical, commercial and administrative issues should first be examined by a team of experts from India and Pakistan. The Government of India had offered to send a team of experts to Pakistan. Alternatively, it was suggested that the Government of Pakistan may depute an expert team to India. There has been no further progress in the matter.

[Translation]

Final Exams of Chartered Accountancy

764. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Chartered Accountancy final

examination slated to be held on May 6, 1998 has been deferred to May 14, 1998;

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

(c) the corrective measures taken by the Government to avoid recurrence of such incidence in future?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) Yes, Sir. One of the papers of Group I of the Final Examination scheduled to be held on 6th May, 1998 was postponed and was held on 14th May, 1998.

(b) Non-adherence of the instructions issued for conduct of the Examinations by the Centre Superintendent of one of the Examination Centres resulted in postponement of the examination.

(c) The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India has discontinued that particular centre for conducting the Chartered Accountants Examinations, in future.

Lions in Kanha National Park

765. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of lions at the Kanha National Park in Madhya Pradesh during the last three years, year-wise;

(b) whether there has been decline in the number of lions;

- (c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the number of cases of poaching of animals which came to light during the last three years and the number of such cases lying pending in courts and the time of their pendency; and

(e) whether any person has been awarded punishment so far for poaching the animals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) Lions do not exist in Kanha National Park.

However, according to the last three estimations, population of tigers in the Park has been as under :

1989	-	97
1993	-	100
1995	-	97

The report of 1997 estimation received from the Government of Madhya Pradesh is being analysed prior to arriving at the final figure.

(b) and (c) The population figures of the last three estimations do not indicate any appreciable decline but only a minor variation which may be attributed to the

permissible limit of human error involved in estimation methodology.

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

[English]

Primary Education

766. SHRI GORDHANBHAI JADAVBHAI JAVIYA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state the percentage of Indian children who have completed primary education at present alongwith break-up of boys and girls students?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Reservation to SCs/STs in Judiciary

767. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :
SHRI D.S. AHIRE :

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to provide reservation to the SCs/STs in the judiciary; and

(b) if so, the time by which the proposal is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) and (b) There is no

proposal under consideration to provide reservation to SCs/STs in the matter of appointment of Judges of High Courts and Supreme Court. As per Articles 233, 234 and 235 of the Constitution of India, the matters relating to appointment, promotion and posting of persons in District and Subordinate Judiciary are within the purview of the respective State Governments and High Courts.

Dumping of Toxic Wastes

768. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Toxic Wastes piling up in India" appearing in the *Statesman* dated April 28, 1998;

(b) if so, whether containers full of toxic substances and exported to India by other countries are lying unclaimed at several ports; and

(c) if so, the facts thereof and the remedial steps Government propose the take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. As per the information supplied by various ports and inland container depots, the status of hazardous wastes lying at some of the ports and container depots is given in the attached statement Existing facilities at various industrial units for disposal of these wastes in an environmentally sound manner have been surveyed by the Ministry of Environment & Forests. Samples of hazardous wastes lying at various ports and container depots have been collected and their analysis is in progress.

Statement
Statement of Hazardous Wastes Imported and Stored/Auctioned at various Indian Ports

Name of the Port	No. of Containers	Quantity Received (In tonnes)										Quantity Auctioned (In tonnes)											
		1996-97					1997-98					1998-97					1997-98						
		Zn Ash	Pb Ash	Lead Batt.	Waste Oil	Other	Zn Ash	Pb Ash	Lead Batt.	Waste Oil	Other	Zn Ash	Pb Ash	Lead Batt.	Waste Oil	Other	Zn Ash	Pb Ash	Lead Batt.	Waste Oil	Other		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
PORTS																							
JLN Port Trust, Mumbai	126	19	3973	Nil	10649	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	1366	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Mumbai Port -## Trust, Mumbai (as on 24.1.1998)	840	140	5898	641	9324	636	Nil	Nil	760	1.78	1.55	Nil	167	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Kandla Port Trust -##	597	614	2719	576	5012	1340	Nil	7719	195	2920	35	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Calcutta Port Trust Cokstee Dock -## system	21	86	Nil	3145	250	Nil	Nil	189	1349	115	22	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Haldia Dock Complex	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
New Mangalore Port Trust	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Chennai Port Trust	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Cochin Port Trust	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Visakapatnam Port Trust	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Paradip Port Trust	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Marmagao Port Trust, Gen	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Tuticorin Port Trust	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

(also dross & scrap)

(skimmings)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
Inland Container Depot																								
Custom House, Kandia, Gujarat		6	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	59	61	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
								(Battery Scrap)																
ICD, Bangalore		5	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	86	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
								(ickel Hydroxide)																
Container Freight States, Ludhiana		1940	108	Nil	Nil	Nil	100	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	1731	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
ICD, Tughlakabad		Nil	99	9325	658	7265	1382	Nil	1942	140	2765	24	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	150	Nil	Nil
																						(9 containers)		
Custom House, Chennai		3	Nil	60	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil

* Containers lying at present-47

Analysis report not received alongwith imported consignment

**Committee to Observe Functioning of
Prasar Bharati**

769. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN :
SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
SHRI A.C. JOS :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the ordinance doing away with the 22 member committee of MPs to observe the functioning of Prasar Bharati Corporation was allowed to lapse by the Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to bring further amendments to the Prasar Bharati Act and also to bring forward a new bill to regulate private broadcasting; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) Yes Sir,

(b) The Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Ordinance, 1997 had removed or modified several important provisions in the principal Act relating to (i) establishment of Parliamentary Committee to oversee the functions of the Corporation; (ii) establishment of Broadcasting Council to determine the quality and contents of the programmes being broadcast; (iii) the upper age limit of 62 years for the CEO; (iv) the retirement of one-third of the Members by rotation which provided for continuity in the functioning of the Board; and (v) the appointment of two full-time members for Finance and Personnel and replacing them with only part-time ex-office members. The removal or modification of these provisions is considered detrimental to the proper functions of Prasar Bharati as originally envisaged.

(c) and (d) Government have initiated steps for introducing an Amendment Bill for restoring the provisions of the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990 during the current session of Parliament. There is no proposal at present, to bring forward a new Bill to regulate private broadcasting.

**Environment and Forestry clearance to
Projects**

770. SHRI D.S. AHIRE :
SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL ;
SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :
SHRI SADASHIV RAO DADOBA MANDLIK :
SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the names and numbers of developmental irrigation projects lying pending for environmental and forestry clearance in the State of Maharashtra;

(b) the forest land required for each project; and

(c) the time by which all projects are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) There is no irrigation project of Maharashtra pending for environment clearance with the Ministry. There are however 56 irrigation projects of Maharashtra pending for clearance under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980. A statement showing names of these projects alongwith forest area involved in each case is attached.

(c) As and when complete details in respect of the proposal are received from the State Government, expenditure action is taken by the Ministry to take a final decision.

Statement

List of Irrigation Projects of Maharashtra pending under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980

S.No.	Name of project	Area
1	2	3
1.	Ektai Minor Irrigation Tank, Amravati.	11.29 ha.
2.	Popatkhedha Minor Irrigation Tank, Amravati.	15.50 ha.
3.	Lower Chulband Medium Irrigation Project, Bhandara.	16.858 ha.
4.	Sandavatola Lift Irrigation Scheme, Bhandara.	13.37 ha.
5.	Pendhari Tank, Sonegaon, Bhandara.	13.11 ha.
6.	Murodoli Monor Irrigation Tank, Bhandara.	163.31 ha.
7.	Dhamanewada Minor Irrigation Tank, Bhandara	8.05 ha.

1	2	3
8.	Jambhulvihira Minor Irrigation Tank, Chandrapur	8.58 ha.
9.	Hirapur Tank Project, Chandrapur	13.26 ha.
10.	Human Project Irrigation Project, Chandrapur	2895.02 ha.
11.	Bagda-II Percolation Tank, Dhule	6.50 ha.
12.	Bagda-I Percolation Tank, Dhule	6.67 ha.
13.	Kanherwadi Tank Project, Dhule	5.90 ha.
14.	Purmepada Minor Irrigation Tank, Dhule	5.83 ha.
15.	Lalmati-I.V. Tank Project, Dhule	11.00 ha.
16.	Wakwadpada Tank Project, Dhule	10.00 ha.
17.	Waghadi Tank Project, Dhule	8.00 ha.
18.	Purmepada Tank Project, Dhule	6.00 ha.
19.	Dhanrat-II Percolation Tank, Dhule	6.55 ha.
20.	Bhandara Tank Project, Dhule	7.86 ha.
21.	Kholvihir V. Percolation Tank, Dhule	6.00 ha.
22.	Nagpur IV Percolation Tank, Dhule	6.63 ha.
23.	Chandsaili Percolation Tank, Dhule	6.06 ha.
24.	Holpani Percolation Tank, Dhule	10.73 ha.
25.	Jugani Percolation Tank, Dhule	5.30 ha.
26.	Manduna Tank Project, Dhule	51.67 ha.
27.	Bhandarbodi Percolation Tank, Nagpur	12.65 ha.
28.	Mohabardi Lift Irrigation Scheme Bhilwapur, Nagpur	9.925 ha.
29.	Lohara Tank (Umrar), Nagpur	11.88 ha.
30.	Ghosikhurd Project, Nagpur	40.4970 ha.
31.	Lonara Tank Project, Nagpur	85.1360 ha.
32.	Dhamangaon Tank Project, Nagpur	26.930 ha.
33.	Chopan Tank Project, Yeotmal	5.84 ha.
34.	Tomghar Tank Project, Pune	2.42 ha.
35.	Andhra Valley Irrigation Scheme, Pune	131.40 ha.
36.	Tomghar Irrigation Project, Pune	2.42 ha.
37.	Jelwgada Minor Irrigation Tank, Kolhapur	4.28 ha.
38.	Minor Irrigation Tank at Kolhapur	5.81 ha.
39.	Jelugade Minor Irrigation Tank, Kolhapur	4.28 ha.
40.	Kandwan Minor Irrigation Tank, Kolhapur	10.57 ha.
41.	Jambhra Medium Irrigation Project, Kolhapur	78.00 ha.
42.	Warna Irrigation Project, Kolhapur	768.79 ha.
43.	Bhavali Dam, Nasik	17.28 ha.
44.	Patali Percolation Tank, Nashik	1.263 ha.
45.	Koprichapada Minor Irrigation Scheme, Thane	12.71 ha.

1	2	3
46.	Nandore Percolation Tank, Thane	9.00 ha.
47.	Kopripada Minor Irrigation Scheme, Thane	12.71 ha.
48.	Surya Project, Thane	1095.3940
49.	Minor Irrigation Tank Shrlgaon, Raigad	27.17 ha.
50.	Nandgaon Water Supply Scheme, Raigad	28.5650
51.	Lal Nala Project, Wardha	29.83 ha.
52.	Bhagwanpur Minor Irrigation Tank, Gadchiroli	47.98 ha.
53.	Karnikhada Lift Irrigation Scheme, Gadchiroli	36.095 ha.
54.	Krishna River Irrigation Project, Satara	19.702 ha.
55.	Minor Irrigation Tank, Arjuni, Bhandara	7.67 ha.
56.	Alesur Minor Irrigation Tank, Bhandara	10.27 ha.

Literacy Drive

771. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the names of districts so far not covered under the Total Literacy Campaign (TLC) and the reasons therefor; and

(b) the steps being taken by the Government to bring the remaining districts under the TLC?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) list indicating the names of districts not yet covered under total literacy campaigns is attached as Statement. Coverage of a district under total literacy campaign depends on its preparedness to launch the campaign, support of State Government, and submission of viable project proposals to the National Literacy Mission.

It has not been possible to launch TLCs in some of the remote and disturbed areas of the country.

(b) The National Literacy Mission propose to cover the uncovered districts under TLC during the Ninth Five-Year Plan, subject to submission of viable project proposals by the concerned districts/States and availability of funds. The concerned State Governments have been advised to prepare time-bound action plans in this regard.

Statement

List of Districts so far not covered under the total Literacy Campaigns

STATE/DISTRICTS

Arunachal Pradesh

Changlang

Dibang valley

East Kameng

East Siang

Upper Siang

Lohit

Lower Subansiri

Papum-Pare

Tawang

Tirap

Upper Subansiri

West Kameng

West Siang

Assam

Dhemaji

Karbi Anglong

Biher

Bokaro

East Champaran

Gaya

Gumla

Garhwa

Koderma

Lohardagga

Muzaffarpur

Nawada

Pakur

Sitamarhi

Sheohar

Lakhisarai

Shekhpura

Patna
 Purnea
Jammu & Kashmir
 Anantnag
 Badgam
 Baramula
 Doda
 Kargil
 Kupwara
 Pulwama
 Punch
 Srinagar
Manipur
 Bishnupur
 Chandel
 Imphal
 Senapati
 Tamenglong
 Thoubal
 Ukhrul
Meghalaya
 South Garo Hills
Nagaland
 Kohima
 Mokokchung
 Mon
 Pheu
 Tuensang
 Wokha
 Jinnaboto
Orissa
 Jajpur
Punjab
 Kapurthala
Sikkim
 East
 West
 North
 South
U.T. of Andaman & Nicobar Islands
U.T. of Daman & Diu
 Diu
U.T. OF Lakshadweep

[Translation]

Foreign Tours

772. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned, 'Adhikarion Ne Ki Ek Sal Mein So Se Jyada Videshi Yatrayain' appearing in the *Dainik Jagran* dated May 6, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the period from 01.04.1997 to 31.3.1998, there were a total of 200 visits abroad by Department of Telecommunication Officials. Details all given in the enclosed statement.

(c) Proposals of Visits abroad are critically examined in the commission at the level of Advisors, Members, Chairman and Hon'ble Minister of Communications and only minimum essential visits are permitted. Most of the visits are for fellowships and training offered by International institutions to which India is a member country. Similarly, in International Telecommunication Fora, it is essential to be present to safeguard national interests in the policy matters.

Statement

Foreign Visits during the period 1.4.1997 to 31.3.1998.

1. 50 Visits in all by Chairman (TC), 4 members, 5 Advisors and Additional Secretary (T).
2. 74 Visits in all by Chief General Managers, Sr. DDGs, DDG's, G.M.'s, and Joint Secretary.
3. 49 Visits in all by Director's and DE's.
4. 12 in all by Sr. SDEs and S.DE's.
5. 15 in all by Officers of the Wireless Planning and Co-ordination Wing.

Total : 200

Private Investment in Power Sector

773. SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to states :

(a) whether the possibilities have been explored for joint ventures of private and public sector companies in the hydel power sector;

(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 POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) The Government of India had announced a policy in 1991 of attracting private sector investment in generation projects including hydro projects. The response from private entrepreneurs has not been encouraging. Of the 13 schemes with an aggregate capacity of 4328 MW for which "in principle" clearance was accorded by the Central Electricity Authority, only four schemes namely Baspa (300 MW) in Himachal Pradesh, Maheshwar (400 MW) in Madhya Pradesh, Vishnu Prayag (400 MW) and Srinagar (330 MW) in Uttar Pradesh have made some progress. Promotion of joint ventures between private companies (both local and foreign) with Central Hydel Public Sector Undertakings will be encouraged. The Government will provide financial support by way of equity contribution and also undertake the construction of the associated transmission lines for the evacuation of power to the load centres.

[English]

Voting Rights to Families displaced from J & K

774. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any steps to secure voting rights to persons and families displaced from Jammu & Kashmir and encamped in different parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the percentage of such displaced persons who exercised their franchise in the recent Lok Sabha polls?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS, AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) and (b) The migrant electors from Kashmir Valley were permitted to exercise their right of franchise through postal ballot and for the purpose a special scheme was laid.

(c) 8.96 per cent.

New Power Policy

775. DR. ASIM BALA :
SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA :

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have drafted or propose to draft a new power policy ;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time frame within which it would be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) Power planning is an ongoing exercise and policy is reviewed periodically,

inter-alia, taking into account the short-term and long-term needs, availability of fuel, finances etc. The draft Ninth Plan. *inter-alia* emphasises on the following :

- (i) Early completion of the on-going projects.
- (ii) Maximisation of benefits from the existing plants by improving the Plant Load Factor (PLF).
- (iii) Reducing the Transmission & Distribution Losses and systems improvement.
- (iv) Greater emphasis on public and private investment in generation, transmission and distribution.
- (v) Setting up of National Grid for inter-regional exchange of power.
- (vi) Rationalisation of electricity tariff.
- (vii) Establishment of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC) at Centre and State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERC) at States level.
- (viii) Demand management and energy conservation measures by different end-users.

Research Works in Science

776. SHRI CHINTA MOHAN :
PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether liberalisation has eroded research works in science;

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

(c) whether youths are showing less interest in getting themselves enrolled in scientific and technical education;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(e) its likely impact on the development of the country?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) to (e) It may not be correct to state that the youths are showing less interest in getting themselves involved in scientific and technical education. In fact there is a keen competition among the youth to gain admission in science courses and Institutes of Technical Education. Government on its part are also encouraging students to pursue scientific and technical education by instituting student fellowships, research fellowships on enhanced rates.

Mushrooming of Unrecognised Schools

777. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA
SHRI MOHAN SINGH :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have made any study to identify the unrecognised schools being run unabatedly in different urban areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to formulate a policy to check the mushrooming of such schools; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to check the same?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (d) No, Sir. Since education is on the concurrent list, the State Governments manage the school systems within their jurisdiction. State/UT Governments grant recognition to schools located in the respective States/UT in accordance with relevant laws and Administrative Rules. The State Govts. are expected to carry out surveys and take necessary remedial action.

T.V. Tower Dibrugarh

778. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the height of the T.V. Tower at Dibrugarh, Assam in order to facilitate more viewers; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It would take about two to three years' time after sanctioning of the scheme, subject to availability of resources and other infrastructural facilities.

[Translation]

Conversion of National Highways into Four Lanes

779. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether any action plan is under consideration of the Government to convert National Highways into four lanes;

(b) if so, the broad features of the action plan;

(c) whether the Agra-Mumbai National Highway No. 3 which is the main National Highway linking Delhi

to Mumbai is also being included in the said action plan;

(d) whether the bypass road facility is also being made available to major cities such as Devas, Indore, Shajapur, Guna and Gwalior which fall on the Agra-Mumbai National Highway; and

(e) if so, the time by which and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. All reaches of National Highways where traffic volume exceeds 35,000 PCUs are proposed to be four laned. In the first instance, National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has been entrusted with four lining of four corridors of National Highways joining four metropolitan of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) It is proposed to be completed during the 9th Five Year Plan subject to availability of adequate resources.

[English]

Funds for Modernisation of Post Offices

780. SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the extent of amount spent on the modernisation of post Offices of Delhi Postal Circle during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government have received any complaints regarding misuse of funds allocated by the departmental officials by showing its proper utilisation on papers only;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government against such officers; and

(d) if not, whether the Government propose to conduct a CBI inquiry into this scam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) The details of amount spent on modernisation of post offices in Delhi Circle during the last three years are as follows :

Year	Amount (In Rs.)
1995-96	1,41,55,291
1996-97	75,06,824
1997-98	34,86,634

(b) and (c) A complaint in this regard was received. The same was looked into in detail but the allegations could not be substantiated.

(d) the question of a CBI inquiry does not arise.

[Translation]

Indian Institute of Mass Communications

781 SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government had decided to set up any branch of Indian Institute of Mass Communication at Jhabua District of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) if so, whether the foundation stone was laid to establish the branch there;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether Madhya Pradesh Government has provided land for the project; and

(e) if so, the purpose for which land is being used?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) to (c) The Government had decided to set up a branch of Indian Institute of Mass Communication at Jhabua (M.P.) The foundation stone of the branch was laid on 30.07.94.

(d) and (e) The Government of M.P. has allotted 7.52 acres of land for construction of the building.

Abuse of Rights in NTPC Project

782. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned, "Rights abuse in NTPC project" appearing in the *Economic Times* dated April 23, 1998;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government to the various observations made therein;

(c) the details of action taken/proposed to be taken in this regard; and

(d) the present status of the project?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Complaints of alleged assault/use of force or violence of displaced villagers, issue of compensation, resettlement and environmental damages have been/are look into by the project authorities, the State Governments and the Government of India. Such complaints have also been raised in various forums including the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) which conducted a through investigation in the matter and also had a full hearing chaired by Shri N. Venkatachalalaha, Chairperson. NHRC Ex-Chief Justice of Supreme Court of India). After careful consideration

of the written and oral submissions, the Commission came to the view that there is no need to pursue the matter and closed the proceedings. Further, the allegation in the press that NTPC has hired any so called 'goon squads' has no basis and is incorrect.

(c) The Rehabilitation & Resettlement (R&R) activities of NTPC are open for review by various independent agencies and are also being reviewed by the World Bank and NTPC on regular basis.

An Independent Monitoring Panel (IMP) comprising 3 eminent members with an NGO, a Social Development expert and a Senior Advocate of the Supreme Court of India as Chairperson has been constituted in November, 1997 to further strengthen the monitoring and review system. The IMP is visiting and is also interacting with the people. The R&R activities are also monitored at the level of Cabinet Secretary at the Centre.

For resettling the Homestead Oustees (HSO), NTPC has created 6 settlement colonies under the approved Policy which envisages providing adequate infrastructure such as developed plots, drains, sanitation facilities, schools, community facilities, health care centres, electricity, etc. Most of the HSOs have shifted, except a few, with whom discussions are on by NTPC and IMP etc. The maintenance of these resettlement colonies are being taken over by the State Governments and this has already been completed in Vindhyaachal project. For the Project Affected Persons (PAPs) who have lost their earning capacity, NTPC, has taken steps to provide alternatives for their rehabilitation in Singrauli region. For the remaining few, NTPC, in consultation with the World Bank, has already drawn an action plan. A Social Impact Assessment (SIA) study has also been conducted by a reputed institute namely XIDAS, Jabalpur. NTPC will take rehabilitation actions in respect of the remaining PAPs as per report of XIDAS.

For resolution of various grievances, there are established mechanisms viz., well qualified social scientists and other staff of NTPC, Public Information Centre, Village Development Advisory Committee with representatives of PAPs/State Government. NTPC etc.

(d) The project works in progress at present are those related to Vindhyaachal Stage-II and construction of Ash Dyke in Rihand.

Doordarshan Serials

783. SHRI C.P.M. GIRIYAPPA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the details of T.V. serials being telecast on Doordarshan Channel-I (National Channel) for the last more than five years;

(b) whether these serials would continue further for several years; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) No serial is being telecast on Channel-1 of Doordarshan continuously for the last five years.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Establishment of Navodaya Vidyalayas

784. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the places where Navodaya Vidyalayas have been established during the last three years till April 1998, State-wise;

(b) the places where such Vidyalayas are proposed to be set up' State-wise; and

(c) the present status of these proposals?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) A statement indicating the Navodaya Vidyalayas which started functioning during the last three years (1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98) is annexed. In addition, a list of Vidyalayas sanctioned during 1997-98 and likely to start functioning in 1998-99 is also attached.

(b) and (c) So far 397 districts have been covered. The aim is to open one Navodaya Vidyalaya each in remaining districts subject to receipt of suitable proposals from the State Governments and availability of funds.

Statement

Statement Indicating Navodaya Vidyalayas Started Functioning during the last three years till April, 1998, State-Wise

State	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Arunachal Pradesh	—	Lower-Subansiri	—
Assam	Tinsukia Jorhat Golaghat Kabri Anglong Morigaon Barpeta Darrang Dibrugarh Kokrajhar	North-Lakhimpur	Goalpara
Bihar	Araria Buzar Saharsa	East-Champaran Hazaribagh Bokaro	Munger Jamui Chatra Deogarh Jahanabad
Orissa	—	Nuapada	Dhenkanal Kendrapara Kota
Rajasthan	Bundi Jhunjhunu	—	—
Uttar Pradesh	Firozabad Badaun	—	—
Haryana	Karnal Panchkula	—	—
Nagaland	Phek	—	—
Tripura	Noth-Tripura	—	—
Meghalaya	—	—	West Garo-Hills
	20	06	10

As per policy of the Samiti, Navodaya Vidyalaya sanctioned in a particular year starts functioning from the next academic year after conduct of JNV Selection Test. Accordingly, the following Vidyalayas sanctioned till 1997-98 are likely to start functioning during 1998-99 :

State	District
Arunachal Pradesh	Changlang
Assam	Haikandi
Bihar	Garwa
	Bhagalpur
	Kishanganj
Punjab	Jalandhar
Sikkim	South Sikkim
Rajasthan	Dholpur
	Bharatpur
Uttar Pradesh	Pithoragarh
	10

[Translation]

Education Schemes for Minority Communities

785. COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of centrally sponsored schemes for education of Minorities, especially Muslims;

(b) the funds allotted and expenditure incurred for the purpose during the last three years, scheme-wise;

(c) the targets fixed and achieved during each of the last three years and targets fixed for 1998-99;

(d) whether some of the educational institutions are non-functional due to non-availability of Funds and shortage of teachers; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Two Centrally sponsored schemes exclusively for education of Minorities, especially Muslims are in Operation. Besides this, the University Grants Commission is providing financial assistance to selected universities/colleges under the Scheme of Coaching Classes for Weaker Sections amongst educationally backward minority communities.

(b) Information given in attached Statement-I.

(c) Information given in attached Statement-II.

(d) and (e) No such case has come to the notice of this department.

Statement-I

Funds Allotted and Expenditure Incurred

(Rs. in crores)

Name of the Schemes	1995-96		1996-97		1997-98	
	Funds allotted	Exp. incurred	Funds allotted	Exp. incurred	Funds allotted	Exp. incurred.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Area Intensive Programme for Educationally Backward Minorities	2.20	2.20	2.20	2.20	10.00	10.99
Financial Assistance for Modernisation of Madarasas	1.22	1.20	2.44	2.41	3.42	1.73
Coaching Classes for weaker sections amongst Educationally Backward Minorities	0.50	0.42	0.55	0.53	0.70	0.53
Total	3.92	3.82	5.19	5.14	14.12	13.25

Statement-II
Targets Fixed and Achieved

Name of the Schemes	Target fixed	Target achieved
1	2	3
Area Intensive programme for Educationally Backward Minorities	Targets are fixed only in terms of granting aid. The nature of activities depend upon the proposal received from the State Governments.	Targets set were fully achieved. In 1997-98 the achievement was 10% more than the set target.
Financial Assistance for Modernisation of Madrasas	A target of 250 Madrasas was fixed during the VIIIth Plan period.	During the period 1995-96, 1996-97 & 1997- 98, 1055 Madrasas were covered under the scheme
Coaching Classes for Weaker Sections amongst Educationally Backward Minorities.	The Coaching Classes are conducted by 21 universities and 59 Colleges.	The number of students coached during the period 1995-96, 1996-97 & 1997-98 is 2756, 4137 & 4681 respectively.

**Approval to Institutes and Courses
by AICTE**

786. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the details of requests received by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) from various bodies/institutes of Andhra Pradesh for approval of institutes and technical courses being run by them during the last five years, year-wise;

(b) whether most of the institutes from Andhra Pradesh were not granted approval by AICTE despite fulfilling the requisite conditions;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether AICTE proposes to reconsider its decision; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Number of proposals received by All India Council for Technical Education from the State of Andhra Pradesh during the last five years is given in the attached Statement.

(b) This is not a fact. Approvals are given on the basis of recommendations received from State Governments, Universities. Director of Technical Education, Expert Committee's visiting reports and Regional Committees of AICTE as per the AICTE regulations.

(c) to (e) Does not arise.

Statement

*Number of proposals received in the Field of
Engineering and Technical*

	Degree	Diploma
1994-95	11	-
1995-96	08	01
1996-97	46	11
1997-98	84	24
1998-99	150	26

Improvement in Power Situation

787. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken/propose to take any concrete measures to improve the power situation in various States/Union Territories and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) and (b) The details of actual power supply position which prevailed in the country during the period 1997-98 and April, 1998 are as under :

Energy (MU)	1997-98	April, 1998
Requirement	434505	37581
Availability	390330	34707
Shortage	34175	2874
%	8.1	7.6

Depending upon the availability of power and in order to bridge the gap between demand and supply, statutory power cuts/restrictions and time to time load sheddings are imposed by respective State Govts./SEBs. However, while imposing power cuts/restrictions sufficient care is taken to ensure that the requirement for agricultural sector depending upon weather conditions, supply to essential consumers and minimum requirement of core sector industries i.e. coal, steel, cement are adequately met.

In order to make optimal use of the available power resources in the country and to improve the overall availability of power and generation capacity in the country, following measures are being taken;

- (i) Encouragement to private sector for investment in power sector.
- (ii) Renovation and modernisation (R&M) of existing generating stations.
- (iii) Coordinated operation of hydro/thermal/nuclear and gas turbine power stations in the regional power system.
- (iv) Promotion of regional integrated operation and encouraging inter-state/regional power transfers. The details of inter-state and inter-regional energy exchanges during 1997-98 and April, are given in attached Statement.
- (v) Staggering of weekly off/recess hours of industrial consumers and regulation of power supply to agricultural consumers through grouping restriction.
- (vi) Augmentation of transmission and transformation capability in the power system.
- (vii) Reduction of transmission and distribution losses.

Statement

(I) Details of Inter-State Energy Exchanges

(All figures in MU)

Region	1997-98	April '98
Northern	1825.7	123.8
Western	Nil	Nil
Southern	Nil	Nil
Eastern	886.5	80.9
North-Eastern	171.2	3
Total	2883.4	207.7

(II) Details of Inter-Regional Energy Exchanges

(All figures in MU)

Region		1997-98	April '98
From	To		
Northern	Western	1154.2	212.2
	Eastern	5.1	Nil
	Southern	Nil	65.2
Western	Northern	377.3	4.4
	Southern	520.9	44.7
	Eastern	1.1	Nil
Southern	Western	40.6	0.4
Eastern	Western (*)	1200	109.2
	Southern (*)	820.2	208.3
	N. Eastern (*)	454.4	33.8
N. Eastern	Eastern	23.2	1.7
Total		4597	679.9

Note (*) : This is in accordance with allocations made by GOI from unallocated output of NTPC stations located in Eastern Region.

[Translation]

Koyal Karo Hydro Electric Power Project

788. SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether all the formalities have been completed and the necessary amount released for the commencement of work on the Koyal Karo Hydro Electric power project;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the likely time by which the work on the project would commence?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) The 710 MW Koyal Karo HE Project in Bihar was entrusted to National Hydro-electric Power Corporation (NHPC) for execution in August, 1980. Due to agitation by the local people and protracted litigation it was not possible to take up construction activities of the project.

The Central Empowered Committee constituted by the Planning Commission had recommended shelving of the project and freezing of further expenditure on the project. However, having regard to the need for providing peaking power in the Eastern Region, approval of the Government is being sought to lift the ban on taking up the project and also to seek investment approval. The project is estimated to cost Rs. 2377.82 crores at March '98 price level. The project will take seven and half years to complete from the date of start of work.

[English]

Family Counselling Centres in Gujarat

789. SHRI CHANDU LAL AJMEERA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether family counselling centres are being run and funded by the Central Social Welfare Board in Gujarat;

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

(c) the main functions of these centres and the extent to which these are discharging their functions with details of their achievements so far, particularly during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) District-wise list of Family Counselling Centres is attached as Statement.

(c) The main functions of the Family Counselling Centres are to provide preventive, curative and rehabilitation services to women victims of atrocities and to provide services like crisis intervention, counselling in cases of marital/family maladjustment, efforts for reconciliation in cases of separation or referral services like short stay, free legal aid, police assistance etc.

The number of cases dealt by these Centres during the last three years are :

Year	No. of Cases dealt
1995-96	1750
1996-97	1943
1997-98	2010

Statement

Gujarat Family Counselling Centres 1997-98

S.No	Name of Distt.	Name of Institutions	Location of FCC
1	2	3	4
1.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat Street Kelvani Mandal, SLU College, New Elishbride Post Office	Same
2.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat State Crime Prevention Trust, Ashirwad, 9/13, Keshav Nagar, Near Subash Bridge	Yuvak Vikas Trust Building, Near High School, Borel Vill. Bayad Taluk.
3.	Ahmedabad	Akhand Jyot Charity Trust, C/o Nirmal Nursing Home Kocherub Paldi	Gram Panchayat Anasan, TQ. Dascroi
4.	Ahmedabad	Lalbhai Group Rural Development Fund, Anandji Kalyanji Blocks, Near Patel Samaj, Vanthali Gate, Naroda Road,	IInd Floor Sri Ram Shopping Centre, Opp. S.T. Bus Stop, Dakore, DT. Kheda,
5.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat Rajya Bal Kalyan Sang, Hlmavanpaldi,	1336/1, Anukunj, Sect-7/D, Bus Stop 1. Gandhi Nagar.
6.	Ahmedabad	Mahila Jagruti Abhlyan Public Charitable Trust, Opp. Taluka Panchayat.	Same
7.	Ahmedabad	Jyoti Sangh, Pathar, Kave Relief Road	Shri. Hirabhai Challi, Opp. Post Office Rajpur, Gomatipur
8.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat Kelvani Trust, S.V. College Compound Relief Road	Mahaldar Office At & PO Sankheda dt. Baroda

1	2	3	4
9.	Ahmedabad	Vatsalya Trust, 18 ALFA Shopping Centre, Near Gyanjoti Vidya Vihar,	Manch Dev's Temple Palsana
10.	Banaskanta	Vanita Shisu Vihar, Basement of Palanpur Taluka, Purchase and Sale Sangh, Old Market Yard, Opp. S.B.I.	Same
11.	Banaskanta	Swami Sunuanand Sewa Trust, 3, Swastic Society, Gohari Road, Palampur	Sheetal Shopping Centre, IInd Floor 28, Station Road, Chanera.
12.	Bhav Nagar	Shri Bhagini Mitra Mandal Sarvodaya Society, Palitana, Bhav Nagar	Same
13.	Bharuch	Akhil Hind Mahila Parishad, Rajpipla Branch, AT & PO. Rajpipla	Late. Smt. Kusumben Manibhai Shah, 27, Mahila Kalyan Bhawan Rajendra Nagar, Society
14.	Bhav Nagar	Kundla Taluka Bhagini Seva Manda, Gandhi Niwas, Ambali Street, Gandhi Chowk, Savarkundla	Gram Sevaco-Op. Society, Near New S.T. Stand, Mahuva Road, Savarkundla
15.	Gandhi Dam	Akhil Kutch Mahila Utkarsh Mandal, Gandhi Dham, Plot No. 276, Ward 1-B, Gandhi Dham	Red Cross Building Shakti Nagar, Gayatri Mandir Road, Kutch DT.
16.	Jamnagar	Jilla Samaj Kalyan Sangh Jamnagar, Pandit Nehru Marg, Near Mahila Chattariya, PO. Patel Colony	Same
17.	Junagarh	Junadhagh Dist. Mahila Mandal C.O. Nehru Yuva Kendra, Kadri Manzil Opp. Collector Office	Near Motakoli Wada-Ki-Wadi Hervash Niwas, Veraval
18.	Junagarh	Shishu Mangal, Kalve Gate, Gandhi Gram, Opp. Collector Bunglow	Same
19.	Jamnagar	Sarvodaya Mahila Udyog Mandal, Okha, C/o Amritben Somaiya, Modi Niwas	Dwarka Jamnagar
20.	Jamnagar	Lalbai Group, Rural Development Fund	Bhanwad
21.	Kutch	Bhuj Taluka Family & Child Welfare Project Collector Compound, Bhuj	Same

1	2	3	4
22.	Khera	Akhand Jyot Foundation 94 Navjeevan Society, Station Road, Ahmedabad	Same
23.	Mehsana	Mehsana Jilla Mahila Utpadak & Vikas Shakari Sangh Ltd. C/o Mehsana Jilla Sahkari Sangh, Basement Rajmarg	Near Khadi Bhandar Basement Rajmahal Road
24.	Panchmahal	Akhil Hind Mahila Parishad Gondhara Shakha, Bhagini Mandal, Godhra Municipal Road	Same
25.	Rajkot	All India Womens Conference, Rajkot Branch, Suvas, Near Moti Tanki, Rajkot	C.V. Shah Hostel Compound, Near Jam Tower, Rajkot
26.	Sabarkanta	Alkaputi Mahila Mandal, Opp. Jay Rokidiya, Hanuman Temple Road, Alkapuri, Himatnagar	Near Central Bank, Opp. C.E.B. Office Hajipur, Himatnagar
27.	Sabarkanta	Family & Child Welfare Samiti, Nayak Nagar, IDAR.	Same
28.	Sabarkanta	Sh. Malpur Taluka Saraswati Seva Sangh, At & Po Malpur,	C/o Kanyalal K. Mehta Pucca House, Nandvan Station Road, Lunavada
29.	Surat	Akhil Hind Mahila Parishad Surat Branch, Bedhaka, Near Hind Milan Mandir, Sonifalia	Same
30.	Surender Nagar	Vikas Vidyalaya, Vidhayan City, Majsehwar	Near Gyatri Clinic Opp. State Bank of Sorashttra, Chotila
31.	Valsad	Astitva (Valsad), Mahila Utkarsh Sanstha, Suraj Apt., Halar Cross Road, Behind Bhagini Samaj	Gajdar Library Floor, Library Mohalla, TQ. Gandevi
32.	Vadodara	Karali Gaug Bhagini Samaj Seva Trust, Dahiva Branch Near Adhiyapak Nagar, Waer Tank Road, Karalibaug Bhawan	Same
33.	Vadodara	Rachna Seva Sangh, Swami Chowk, P.O. Godali, TQ. Sankheda	Near Khetivadi Utpana Bazar Samiti, Behind Railway Station Post Bodali

[Translation]

Density of Forests

790. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL :
SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

- (a) the ratio of density of forests in the country in comparison to international ratio;
- (b) the position of Madhya Pradesh in this regard;
- (c) whether the ratio of forest density in Madhya Pradesh has decreased due to which the lives of tribals have been affected; and
- (d) the steps being taken by the Government for the conservation of forests, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI) : (a) No international ratio has been prescribed about density of forest. However, if per capita availability of forests is to be taken as an indicator then the ratio works out to 0.07 hectares (1991 Census) in India as compared to 0.89 hectares in the world. As per the State of Forest Report, 1997, country has 19.27% of the geographical area under forest cover against a minimum of one-third of the total land area under forest or tree cover stipulated in the National Forest Policy, 1988.

(b) The per capita forests in Madhya Pradesh is about 0.20 hectares and 29.6% of the geographical area is under forest cover.

(c) If the per capita forests forms the basis of forest density, there is a marginal decrease from 0.206 to 0.200 hectares in Madhya Pradesh (1991 Census) between 1995 and 1997 assessments. If this is to be viewed in terms of dense forests then in Madhya Pradesh, the dense forest has decreased by 12,408 sq. km. as compared to 1995 assessment.

There has been a decrease of 1% of forest area compared to the geographical area of tribal districts in Madhya Pradesh as per 1997 assessment which may have marginal affect on the lives of tribals living in near vicinity.

(d) Major steps being taken by the Central and State Governments for conservation of forests are :

- (i) Afforestation programmes are undertaken by State Governments from their own resources as well as with financial assistance from Government of India.
- (ii) Externally Aided Projects are being implemented for preservation of forests and forest wealth;
- (iii) Guidelines have been issued to all the State Governments to involve village

communities in protection and regeneration of degraded forests through Joint Forest Management;

- (iv) Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 has been enacted to regulate the diversion of forest lands;
- (v) A network of 447 wildlife sanctuaries and 84 National Parks covering about 1,50,000 sq. km has been set up for conservation of wild flora and fauna. Financial assistance is provided by the Central Government for development of national parks and sanctuaries.
- (vi) Hunting of wild animals in Schedules I to IV of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, has been banned. Special measures for protection and conservation of tiger, elephants and rhinos and their habitat are also being implemented.
- (vii) A project titled "India Eco Development Project" funded by IDA/GEF is under implementation and it aims for bio-diversity conservation through eco development in Seven National Parks/Tiger Reserves.

[English]

Clearance to Power Project in Kerala

791. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government have recently cleared any power project at Cannanore in Kerala;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether any foreign company has equity participation in the said project;
- (d) whether the Government of Kerala has raised objections to the project; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) No power project at Cannanore in Kerala in the private sector has been techno-economically cleared recently by the Central Electricity Authority (CEA).

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The developers of one project viz., Kannur CCGT (513 MW) have proposed foreign equity participation by M/s. Enron International in the project.

(d) and (e) The State Government of Kerala has informed that they do not have any objection to the setting up of the Kannur CCGT Project. However, the State Government does not agree to the financial structure proposed with M/s. Enron as a partner.

LPT/HPT in Hilly States

792. SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) the target fixed for setting up of L.P.Ts. and H.P.Ts. during the year 1998-99 and the number of LPTs/HPTs to be installed in Hilly States of the country;

(b) the number of LPTs and HPTs lying out of order in the country since the last 2 months, State-wise; and

(c) the time by which those Transmitters are likely to be repaired and the expected amount to be incurred on these repairs?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) 362 TV transmitters of varying powers, including 126 transmitter in Hilly areas, are at present, under implementation. Out of these, 79 transmitters have already been completed, including 26 in Hilly areas. 9 HPTs including 2 HPTs in Hilly states are targeted for completion during 1998-99.

(b) and (c) VLPTs at Kalkatang In Arunachal Pradesh, Saiha in Mizoram, Moreh in Manipur, Basot in Uttar Pradesh, Transposer Churk in Uttar Pradesh have been damaged/out of order. Steps for repairing these has already been taken up.

VLPT Jahalma, VLPT Bhasmur in Himachal Pradesh and VLPT Kilhotran in Jammu and Kashmir are also out of order and will be repaired when the approach road to these areas are open.

Repairing and maintenance of transmitters is a regular process. All efforts are being made to set them right at the earliest. The amount to be incurred on repairs can not be predicted in advance.

PCOs Commissioned by Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.

793. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of public call offices (PCOs) in different areas of the capital commissioned by Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. and the criteria adopted in the allotment of such PCOs;

(b) whether there are complaints of violation of the terms and conditions by the PCO owners such as overcharging, installation of three minute disconnectors etc.; and

(c) if so, the number of such complaints received during the last three years and the action taken by the Government against the errant PCO owners?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) The number of Public Call Offices working in different areas of the capital, Delhi are as under :

Area	STD/ISD/PCOs	Local PCOs.
Central	356	1904
East	1136	3448
Trans-Yamuna	1578	4065
North	1444	4104
South-I	619	1152
South-II	1240	1935
West-I	1502	4877
West-II	882	4274

STD/ISD PCO booths are allotted to educated unemployed persons subject to technical feasibility and the candidates fulfilling other conditions. Educational qualification is 8th pass for rural and Metric/High School Pass for Urban areas. Local PCOs are allotted subject to technical feasibility and suitability in each case.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir, 593 cases of violation of terms and conditions by the PCO owners were received during the last three years. Out of these, 280 PCOs have been disconnected. For 144 cases warning has been issued and the remaining cases are under process at different stages.

[Translation]

Speed Post Facility

794. SHRI PRABHAS CHANDRA TIWARI :
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS/be pleased to state :

(a) the number of post offices in the country where speed post facility is available, city-wise/town-wise; and

(b) the time by which this facility is likely to be made available in the remaining post offices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Speed Post is not a normal Post Office counter facility. It is a business venture of the Department and this service has been set up in some selected cities and towns in the country. There are at present 76 such cities/towns in the country where this service has been established. For the purpose of booking of Speed Post articles not all but a few strategically located Post Offices are identified for the work.

(b) Speed Post service in other cities/towns will be extended based on business considerations as a continuous activity of the Department.

[English]

Functioning of Telephone Exchanges

795. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN :
SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the telephone exchanges situated in North Bengal areas of West Bengal have not been functioning satisfactorily;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the efforts being made by the Government to remove the deficiencies;

(d) the number of exchanges working with STD facilities out of total exchanges in West Bengal;

(e) whether any scheme to expand and modernise these telephone exchanges and to link more and more telephone exchanges with STD service is under consideration of the Government;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) and (b) The performance of telephone exchanges situated in North Bengal is generally satisfactory.

(c) Following steps are being taken by West Bengal Telecom. Circle for further improvement of the services :

(i) All exchanges have been converted into electronic exchanges.

(ii) Provision of STD connectivity to left out exchanges.

(iii) Replacement of fault prone underground cables by jelly filled cables.

(iv) Upgradation of the outdoor plant network by laying of cables in ducts.

(v) Introduction of modern tools and testing aids.

(vi) Training of operational staff in modern technology systems being inducted in the Deptt. of Telecom Network.

(vii) Opening of customer service centres in large number of places.

(d) The number of exchanges in West Bengal Telecom Circle provided with STD facilities is 556 out of 702 exchanges as on 31.03.1998.

(e) Yes Sir.

(f) (i) The West Bengal Telecom Circle has planned to provide STD facility to 100 more existing exchanges and to 70 new exchanges of 100 exchanges proposed to be set up during 1998-99.

(ii) 246 exchanges out of 727 exchanges as on 31.3.98 (This included 25 Nos. of exchanges of Sikkim also) are planned for capacity augmentation during the same period in West Bengal Telecom Circle subject to the availability of equipment and stores.

(g) Does not arise in view of (f) above.

Review of Operation Black Board Programme

796. SHRI MADHAVRAO PATIL :
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADODA MANDLIK :
SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the operation Black Board Programme;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the last three years;

(c) whether the Government propose to bring about suitable restructuring of the programme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the targets fixed for this programme during the current years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) Since its inception in 1987-88, the scheme of Operation Blackboard is being implemented through State Governments and UT Administration. Quarterly Progress Reports submitted by them are the basis for concurrent monitoring and review of the physical and financial progress of the scheme. Various aspects of Operation Blackboard were discussed and reviewed in Conference of Education Ministers and Education Secretaries of States in April, 1995 and August, 1996.

Four regional meetings were taken by Education Secretary with the officials of all States and UTs during 1997-98 in which the implementation of Operation Blackboard Scheme was reviewed in detail.

In the above mentioned reviews, it was noted with satisfaction that the scheme has contributed to conversion of about 1.50 lakh single teacher primary schools to dual teacher schools, construction of 1.77 lakh classrooms and provision of teaching learning material to 5.23 lakh primary schools. Issues on which

concern was expressed include delays in appointment of teachers; unsatisfactory pace of construction of school buildings and under-utilisation of teaching learning material by teachers.

(c) and (d) The Operation Blackboard Scheme was last revised in 1993-94 to extend it to upper primary schools and to provide for a third teacher and third class room in larger primary schools with more than 100 children. During the VIII Plan, the coverage of these components was limited to 10% and 30% of such schools respectively. A provision of Rs. 304 crores had been made in 1998-99 to fund these components of Expanded Operation Blackboard in uncovered schools.

[Translation]

Constitution of Judicial Commission for Judges

797. SHRI ANAND RATNA MAURYA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any proposal to constitute a high level judicial Commission to probe into the cases relating to misconduct of judges of Supreme Court of India and High Courts and to make recommendation to remove them is under consideration of Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) to (c) One of the items of the National Agenda for Governance is to set up a National Judicial Commission to make recommendations for Judicial appointments in the Supreme Court and the High Courts and draw up a code of ethics for the judiciary.

It is not possible to indicate the time by which the final decision in this regard would be taken.

[English]

Afforestation Programme

798. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK
SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of targets fixed for afforestation and achievements made during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the reasons for the shortfall, if any, in achieving the targets;

(c) the remedial steps being taken to achieve the targets; and

(d) the target fixed during 1998-99 for Karnataka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI) : (a) The State-wise targets and achievements for afforestation in each of the last three years are given in the attached Statement.

(b) The shortfall in the achievements in each of the years for distribution of seedlings and the area brought under plantation is mainly because of lack of funds. Simultaneously, expenditure on wages for labour, which is a large component of afforestation work, has been rising.

(c) Efforts have been made to enhance the financial allocations for afforestation work in the various schemes of different Ministries in the Government of India and in States. State Governments have also been asked to ensure that all efforts are made to achieve targets using cost effective measures with peoples' participation.

(d) The targets fixed for Karnataka for 1998-99 are as under :

Seedlings Distribution	Area
(For planting on Private lands)	(Public lands including forest lands)
400 lakhs	68000 hectares.

Statement

Statewise/Yearwise targets and Achievements for Afforestation/Tree Planting Activities under 20 point programme during 1995-96 to 1997-98

Area in Hectares
Seedlings in Lakhs

Name of State/UT	1995-96				1996-97				1997-98				
	Targets		Achievements		Targets		Achievements		Targets		Achievements		
	Seedlings Distribution (for planting on pvt. lands)	Area (Public lands including forest lands)	Seedlings Distribution (For planting on pvt. lands)	Area (Public lands including forest lands)	Seedlings Distribution (For planting on pvt. lands)	Area (Public lands including forest lands)	Seedlings Distribution (For planting on pvt. lands)	Area (Public lands including forest lands)	Seedlings Distribution (For planting on pvt. lands)	Area (Public lands including forest lands)	Seedlings Distribution (For planting on Pvt. lands)	Area (Public lands including forest lands)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1. Andhra Pradesh	1100.00	45000.00	1436.40	7572.00	1100.00	50000.00	1425.30	114667.00	1100.00	50000.00	1931.65	117372.00	Feb.98
2. Arunachal Pradesh	7.00	9078.00	7.00	9078.00	6.00	9500.00	6.00	6813.00	7.00	10000.00	16.00	6317.00	Mar.98
3. Assam	27.50	27500.00	27.09	16497.00	25.00	27500.00	48.68	18517.70	25.00	27000.00	23.27	2842.00	Feb.98
4. Bihar	825.00	55000.00	161.20	5423.00	500.00	40000.00	78.50	9296.00	500.00	40000.00	110.33	14222.00	Feb.98
5. Goa	38.50	2090.00	25.72	1327.00	30.00	1800.00	23.00	1351.00	30.00	1800.00	13.74	1123.30	Feb.98
6. Gujarat	1650.00	59400.00	1707.65	67101.73	1908.00	65597.00	2110.20	99393.00	1900.00	65000.00	1919.04	62116.00	Feb.98
7. Haryana	250.00	29700.00	51.94	33438.00	200.00	32000.00	73.73	23235.00	200.00	32000.00	33.32	17188.00	Feb.98
8. Himachal Pradesh	22.00	26200.00	35.74	29976.00	20.00	28000.00	26.98	27503.00	20.00	30000.00	30.38	28000.00	Mar.98
9. Jammu & Kashmir	60.00	22000.00	60.51	23000.00	60.00	24000.00	59.85	24927.00	60.00	24000.00	51.25	15643.00	Feb.98
10. Karnataka	495.00	52800.00	310.88	65712.00	400.00	65000.00	235.75	60637.00	400.00	65000.00	256.35	52423.05	Mar.98
11. Kerala	330.00	17600.00	45.40	15302.49	180.00	19000.00	45.46	15168.00	180.00	19000.00	10.98	3350.00	Feb.98
12. Madhya Pradesh	495.00	148500.00	599.22	156553.45	450.00	150000.00	169.88	117623.00	450.00	150000.00	457.73	139211.00	Feb.98
13. Maharashtra	1100.00	133100.00	1017.96	120139.00	1150.00	126000.00	864.16	10781.00	1150.00	126000.00	1121.31	123430.80	Mar.98
14. Manipur	33.00	11000.00	11.85	9105.00	25.00	12000.00	15.50	12230.00	25.00	12000.00	7.06	4403.00	Mar.98
15. Meghalaya	82.50	22000.00	87.98	3274.00	40.00	18000.00	47.80	1622.00	40.00	18000.00	71.33	3978.00	Feb.98
16. Mizoram	22.00	19800.00	22.49	12205.00	22.00	19800.00	67.59	9327.00	22.00	19800.00	4.71	8589.00	Feb.98
17. Nagaland	82.50	8250.00	34.70	44.00	60.00	8000.00	0.00	0.00	60.00	8000.00	0.00	0.00	Feb.98
18. Orissa	330.00	79200.00	576.02	112110.00	300.00	79000.00	811.88	93371.00	300.00	79000.00	436.70	83824.00	Feb.98
19. Punjab	49.50	18700.00	80.16	10526.00	52.00	20000.00	88.56	8825.00	52.00	20000.00	65.86	5046.00	Mar.98

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
20. Rajasthan	330.00	86900.00	388.32	95280.00	380.00	76550.00	399.41	83440.00	400.00	83000.00	346.81	56020.00	Feb. 98
21. Sikkim	22.00	10120.00	25.00	10120.00	22.00	11000.00	22.00	9586.00	22.00	11000.00	22.57	9966.86	Mar. 98
22. Tamil Nadu	1100.00	82500.00	1112.10	92208.00	1100.00	85000.00	1104.64	73501.00	1100.00	85000.00	1119.53	93560.00	Feb. 98
23. Tripura	23.65	8500.00	21.72	12078.59	23.00	10000.00	41.19	9034.00	40.00	10000.00	78.58	8650.00	Mar. 98
24. Uttar Pradesh	2000.00	101200.00	2285.43	84326.97	2200.00	110000.00	2121.24	92790.00	2200.00	110000.00	1907.38	87286.00	Feb. 98
25. West Bengal	833.80	41800.00	681.19	38509.00	825.00	44000.00	556.00	21500.00	825.00	44000.00	28.00	19000.00	Feb. 98
26. A&N Havell	5.00	3300.00	5.40	3831.00	5.00	3300.00	5.05	4019.86	5.00	4500.00	1.38	3462.00	Mar. 98
27. Chandigarh	0.00	495.00	0.00	140.00	0.10	500.00	0.19	666.00	0.10	500.00	0.56	66.00	Feb. 98
28. D & N Havell	15.95	1100.00	13.85	980.00	16.00	1000.00	10.00	300.00	16.00	1000.00	7.00	300.00	Mar. 98
29. Daman & Diu	1.10	165.00	1.93	41.00	2.00	100.00	3.18	3.00	2.00	50.00	0.40	138.00	Feb. 98
30. Delhi	15.00	500.00	26.81	1072.00	25.00	1000.00	23.42	936.00	25.00	1000.00	3.28	0.00	Feb. 98
31. Lakshadweep	4.51	66.00	4.62	69.00	5.00	72.00	4.22	62.00	5.00	75.00	1.97	21.00	Feb. 98
32. Pondicherry	4.40	220.00	5.71	182.00	5.00	78.00	5.15	78.33	5.00	75.00	5.38	54.00	Feb. 98
Total	11354.91	1123784.00	10911.99	1105431.23	11136.10	1137797.00	10494.51	941002.89	11166.10	1146800.00	10083.85	967602.01	

Increase in the Container Capacity of Ports

799. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are planning to increase the container capacity of ports with the construction of two berth container terminals on BOT basis at Jawaharlal Port Trust, Mumbai through the private investment;

(b) if so, the details of the proposal formulated/ finalised with important features thereof;

(c) the present status of the proposal and details of private sector offers of investment received for participation in the project and decision taken thereon; and

(d) the details of likely investment proposed during the current year for creation of additional container handling capacity with modern technology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A new 2 Berth Container Terminal at Jawaharlal Nehru Port is being set up through private sector participation on BOT basis. The Berths will have a total length of 600 meter. The Terminal will be equipped with all necessary equipment required for container handling as well as back up area for parking of containers and a Railway-yard for ICD containers.

(c) The project is under construction. The licence was awarded on the basis of competitive global bids, in which the highest bidder i.e. M/s. P & O, Australia led Consortium, have been entrusted the work on BOT basis.

(d) In addition to the Container Terminal being developed by P&O, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) for its own Container Terminal proposes to acquire 2 post panamax size Rail Mounted Quay Cranes which are likely to cost about Rs. 50 crores. A provision of Rs. 2.5 crores has been made during 1998-99 for this purpose.

[Translation]

Offices of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan

800. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the places where the offices of the Commissioner and the Deputy Commissioner of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan are located in the country;

(b) the places where these offices are functioning in the Government buildings; and

(c) the time by which separate buildings are likely to be constructed for their offices at those places where the Government buildings are not available though the

land is available, so that these offices could be shifted from the premises of Kendriya Vidyalayas where these are functioning at present?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) The office of the Commissioner of the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan is located at New Delhi and the same is functioning in its own building. All the Deputy Commissioners of the Sangathan also function in the same building.

(c) Does not arise.

Inadequate Telephone Facilities in M.P.

801. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether telephone subscribers of Madhya Pradesh particularly in Jabalpur have been facing telephone problems such as dead lines, fault in exchange, overbilling, wrong number call, tapping of telephones and serving of bills being received even before installation of telephone connections etc.; and

(b) if so, the action being contemplated by the Union Government to redress such problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Sir, the position is given below :

(i) The average fault rate for M.P. Circle as a whole is 14.9 faults per 100 telephones per month and it is about 20 for Jabalpur.

(ii) Average complaints for over billing per month for M.P. Circle as a whole is 0.11% and it is about 0.06% for Jabalpur.

(iii) complaints about wrong numbers are received very rarely. No such complaints about tapping of telephones are received.

(iv) No complaints have been received regarding bills sent prior to installation of telephones.

However, suitable corrective steps are taken if any lapse is brought to the notice of the management.

(b) All such complaints are attended as per the departmental norms.

[English]

Sexual harassment of women at Work Places

802. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether in a landmark judgement on August 13, 1997 the Supreme Court had laid down certain

guidelines prescribing sexual harassment at work place and other institutions and directed employers to set up procedures through which women can make their complaints;

(b) if so, the guidelines and directives issued in this regard; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for implementation of these guidelines?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND THE MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) :

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Supreme Court's order, *inter alia*, lays down the actions that are required to be taken by all employers and persons in charge of workplaces and institutions. These are; (a) express prohibition of sexual harassment at the workplace and steps to prevent/deter commission of acts of sexual harassment and their resolution (b) include rules/regulations prohibitions sexual harassment and provide for penalties for violation in the relevant conduct and discipline rules and (c) setting up of complaint mechanism within each organisation headed by a woman with at least half of the members being women etc.

(c) The Central Ministries/Departments attached and subordinate officers, Public Undertakings, autonomous bodies and all the State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been advised to set up the Complaints Committee and take other actions as envisaged in the guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court of India. Further, the Central Civil Service (Conduct) Rules, 1964 have been amended to make a specific provision for the prohibition of sexual harassment of Working Women.

World Climate Conference at Kyoto

803. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :
PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the World Climate Conference held at Kyoto (Japan) in December, 1997 reached an accord calling for mandatory cuts in emission of green house gases by industrialised nation;

(b) if so, the details of deliberations/discussions that took place in the conference and the extent to which levels green house gases emission is proposed to be reduced by the developed nations, indicating the time-schedule laid therefor under the accord;

(c) the corresponding obligations imposed thereby on the developing nations including India; and

(d) the steps taken/being taken in the light thereof to ensure sustainable development?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Third Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held during December 1—11, 1997 in Kyoto, Japan adopted the Kyoto Protocol for mandatory cuts in the emissions of green house gases by the industrialised nations.

(b) The adopted Kyoto Protocol enjoins upon the developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions respective to 1990 levels during the first commitment period 2008-2012 as detailed in the statement attached.

(c) and (d) There are no corresponding obligations imposed on the developing countries including India to adopt any mandatory cuts in the emissions of green house gases.

Statement

Party	Quantified emission limitation or reduction commitment (percentage of base year or period respective to 1990 levels)
1	2
Australia	108
Austria	92
Belgium	92
Bulgaria*	92
Canada	94
Croatia*	95
Czech Republic*	92
Denmark	92
Estonia*	92
European Community	92
Finland	92
France	92
Germany	92
Greece	92
Hungary*	94
Iceland	110
Ireland	92
Italy	92
Japan	94
Latvia*	92
Liechtenstein	92
Lithuania*	92

1	2
Luxembourg	92
Monaco	92
Netherlands	92
New Zealand	100
Norway	101
Poland*	94
Portugal	92
Romania*	92
Russian Federation*	100
Slovakia*	92
Slovenia*	92
Spain	92
Sweden	92
Switzerland	92
Ukraine*	100
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	92
United States of America	93

* Countries that are undergoing the process of transition to a market economy.

Issue of Patta on Forest Land

804. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has requested for the issue of 'Patta' (Registration of land ownership) in favour of farmers and cultivators in possession of forest lands;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government have agreed to give such title to the cultivators in possession of forest lands before January 1, 1977; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) to (d) The State Government of Kerala had furnished a proposal under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 for diversion of 28,588.159 ha. of forest land for regularisation of pre 1.1.1977 encroachments taken place over forest land in Idukki, Pathanamthitta, Thrissur, Ernakulam and Kollam districts of the State. Formal approval under the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 to the above mentioned proposal of the State Government has already been accorded on 31.1.1995.

[Translation]

Construction of Power Sub-Stations

805. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the construction of power substations in districts of Bihar has not been completed for the last many years whereas crores of rupees has been wasted by installing costly machines there;

(b) whether the Government propose to complete the construction work of power sub-stations; and

(c) the time by which these sub-stations are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) Bihar State Electricity Board has intimated that there are 9 Nos. each of 220/132 KV and 132/33 KV Substations Where the construction work is in progress in Bihar. The details of these sub-stations and their completion schedule are given in the attached Statement-I and Statement-II.

Statement-I

220/132 KV sub-stations in Bihar as per information given by BSEB

S. No.	Name of Sub-stations	Capacity (MVA)	Original cost Rs. lakhs	Latest cost Rs. lakhs	Expenditure upto 97-98 Rs. lakhs	Target date of completion
1.	Begusarai	200	264.54	1638.00	938.00	12/1998
2.	Hatia	100	264.73	1850.00	Nil	3/2000
3.	Hajipur	100	288.73	1015.89	258.39	6/1999
4.	Chalbasa	200	863.20	1059.58	5.58	3/2001
5.	Jasidih	200	836.80	1648.26	40.00	12/2001
6.	Jamalpur	200	-	1850.00	Nil	6/2001
7.	Samastipur	200	-	1850.00	Nil	6/1999
8.	Ramchandrapur	300	823.50	1438.43	1176.00	3/1998
9.	Khagaul	300	998.45	998.46	Nil	3/1999

Statement-II

132/33 KV Sub-Stations in Bihar as per information given by Bihar State Electricity Board

Sl. No	Name of S/S	Capacity (MVA)	Original cost Rs. Lakhs	Latest cost Rs. Lakhs	Expenditure upto 1997-98	Target date
1.	Rajkharsawan	2x20	42.00	600.00	70.00	12/1998
2.	Kishanganj	2x20	118.20	600.00	70.00	12/1998
3.	Mithapur	2x50	402.00	1000.00	12.00	6/1998
4.	Begusarai	2x20	-	750.00	Nil	6/98
5.	Kataiya	1x20	300.00	300.00	Nil	6/98
6.	Kahalgaon	2x20	450.00	450.00	450.00	12/98
7.	Banka	2x20	42.35	600.00	157.00	10/1999
8.	Gumla	2x20	118.29	600.00	68.00	6/1999
9.	Daltanganj	2x20	118.20	675.00	50.00	6/1999

[English]

Scheme for Modernisation of Existing National Highways

806. SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated or proposed to formulate any scheme for the modernisation of existing National Highways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which such scheme is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government proposes to four lane National Highways (NHs) joining the metropolitan cities of Delhi, Calcutta, Chennai & Mumbai in the first instance followed by other reaches of NHs, strengthening of existing 2 lanes and widening single lane to two lanes, reconstruction of bridges, bypasses, road safety, etc. and taking up some expressways.

(c) All these works are expected to cost nearly Rs. 75,000 crores and their completion will depend on the allocation to the Road Sector in the 9th and subsequent Plans.

Limit for Funding of Power Projects by IPFI

807. SHRI HARIN PATHAK : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have fixed any funding limit of 40% for Indian Public Finance Institutes in power project based on indigenous equipments;

(b) whether any representation from State Government has been received to relax the limit to exclude the funding from Indian Commercial Banks while calculating aggregate of Indian Public Finance Institutes; and

(c) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) The private power policy *inter alia* stipulates that an amount not exceeding 40% of the total outlay may come from Indian public financial institutions, but the remaining amount should be met from other sources. The Government of Gujarat had requested that Independent Power Producers (IPPs) sourcing equipment from indigenous suppliers should be exempted from this limit. This request is under consideration.

Sports Stadium in Buldana

808. SHRI MUKUL WASNIK : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have cleared any proposal for the construction of a sports stadium in Buldana district of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details of the proposed stadium;

(c) whether the Government has released any funds for the construction of this stadium; and

(d) if so, the details of the funds released and their utilisation?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government has sanctioned a proposal

for construction of a District Sports Complex at Buldana at an estimated cost of Rs. 128.16 lakh. This will have an athletic track of 400 metres, playfields for volleyball, Basketball, Kho-kho, Kabaddi, Hall for multi-gym equipment, an exclusive Gymnasium Hall and an Outdoor Stadium.

(c) and (d) Against the sanctioned grant of Rs. 50.00 lakh, an amount of Rs. 25.00 lakh was released by the Central Government on 10.11.1995. However, no utilisation certificate in respect of utilisation of the grant released has so far been received from the Government of Maharashtra.

Kol Dam Project

809. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Himachal Pradesh is breaching the Kol Dam Project agreement signed with the Rajasthan in 1984;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the government of Rajasthan proposed for special allocation from Central Sector Power Stations till Rajasthan get share of power from Kol Dam Project as per agreement; and

(d) if so, the action being taken by Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (d) On 30th June, 1984, an agreement was executed between State Governments of Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan for investigation and execution of Kol Dam Hydel Project. The agreement provided for sharing of investment and benefits between the two States in the manner indicated below :

	<i>Capital</i>	<i>Benefits</i>
Rajasthan	75%	63%
Himachal Pradesh	25%	37%

The execution of the Kol Dam Project could not be taken up due to problem of funding. Thereafter, the Government of Himachal Pradesh invited bids for execution of project in the Private Sector. The response was not adequate. The Government of Himachal Pradesh has now suggested that the project may be executed by National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) or any other agency. The modalities for project funding, execution and sharing of costs and benefits have to be firmed up in consultation with the Government of Himachal Pradesh.

Installation of Power Projects

810. PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have worked out a scheme for installing power projects during the current financial year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken for their biddings?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) and (b) During 1998-99, the capacity addition of 3299.3 MW is envisaged from 31 projects already under construction. The details are as follows :

Project	Type	State	Capacity (MW)
Kathalguri ST	T	Assam/NEEPCO	30
Agartala GT 4	T	Tripura/NEEPCO	21
Kayamkulam GT1	T	Kerala/NTPC	115.3
GHTP Bhatinda	T	Punjab	210
Wanakbori U-7	T	Gujarat	210
Brahmpuram U-5	T	Kerala	20
Suratgarh TPS U-1	T	Rajasthan	250
Leimakhong U-1 to 6	T	Manipur	36
Karaikal CCGT	T	Pondicherry	32.5
Peguthan ST	T	Gujarat/Pvt.	250
Surat Lignite U-1	T	Gujarat/Pvt.	125
Dabhot Ph-I	T	Maharashtra/Pvt.	740
Torangallu U-1 & 2	T	Karnataka/Pvt.	260
Basin Bridge DG 1-4	T	Tamil Nadu/Pvt.	200
Budge-Budge U-2	T	W. Bengal/CESC	250
Banaskhandi	T	Assam/Pvt.	5
Doyang U-1	H	Nagaland/NEEPCO	25
Sobla	H	Uttar Pradesh	6
Upper Sindh -II	H	Jammu & Kashmir	35
Sewa St III	H	Jammu & Kashmir	9
Chenani St.III	H	Jammu & Kashmir	7.5
Ranjit Sagar U-4	H	Punjab	150
Warna U-2	H	Maharashtra	8
Dudhganga U-1	H	Maharashtra	12
Kadana Ext.	H	Gujarat	60
Singur	H	Andhra Pradesh	7.5
Kalinadi U-2&3 and Kadra	H	Karnataka	180
Poringalkuthu	H	Kerala	16
Sathnur Dam	H	Tamil Nadu	7.5
Potteru	H	Orissa	6
Teesta Canal Fall	H	West Bengal	15
Total			3299.3

T-Thermal

H-Hydel

Changes in Education System

811. SHRI K.S. RAO : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the number of suicides committed by students unable to bear pre and post examination stresses and tensions, has been increasing year after year;

(b) if so, the details of the suicides committed by the students on this account during the last five years; State-wise;

(c) whether a number of eminent educationists and expert Committees have from time to time called for change in the education system, syllabus, method of teaching, system of examination and evaluation in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to improve the entire system of education in the country in the light of experiments in the foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Such instances which get reported from time to time have come to the notice of the Government.

(b) No such data-base is maintained by the Government.

(c) and (d) It is a fact that a general concern about the need to change the educational system to reduce the stress-level has been expressed from time to time by several people, including prominent educationists. Several suggestions have been made to make the system more student-friendly.

(e) It is proposed to review to the situation in depth and in consultation with all concerned.

Export of Genetic Material

812. SHRI G. GANGA REDDY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a national authority for regulation of the export of genetic material, and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) A proposal to enact a law on Biological Diversity is under consideration of the Government. Regulation of access to genetic material and creation of a mechanism to regulate such access form part of the proposal under consideration.

Development of Chilka Lake

813. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Orissa has sought financial assistance from Government for desilting and development of Chilka lake;

(b) if so, the assistance given by the Government for the purpose; and

(c) the steps taken to desilt and develop the lake at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government of India has provided financial assistance of Rs. 112.30 lakhs to the Government of Orissa between 1988-1991 for undertaking activities like vegetation and contour bunding, water harvesting structures, gully control, stream bank erosion control, periphery bund, habitat improvement of Nalabana, education awareness work and establishment of information/data base.

The Tenth Finance Commission has recommended an amount of Rs. 27 crores for preservation of Chilka lake under Special Problem Grant. Action plan for Chilka lake for 1996-2000 prepared by Government of Orissa has been approved by Inter-Ministerial Empowered Committee (IMEC) of Ministry of Finance. A sum of Rs. 10.46 crores has already been released to the State Government for development of Chilka lake. Works being undertaken includes improvement of water exchange, salinity cost of dredgers and dredging operation.

Foreign Owned Ships

814. SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Indian Courts cannot try cases involving foreign owned ships" appearing in the *Times of India* dated April 26, 1998;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government to the actionable observations made therein and facts of the matter reported therein;

(c) the steps initiated so far to deal with the problem; and

(d) the details of action now proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The News Item carried the ruling given by the Supreme Court in an appeal filed on behalf of a foreign shipowner, that Indian Courts did not have any jurisdiction under the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 to entertain and try suits for damages in case of a collision between two foreign-owned vessels, outside the territorial waters of India. The news item did not report any actionable observations for the Government.

Construction of Bypass on NH-4

815. SHRI RAVI SITARAM NAIK : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have acquired the land to construct a bypass at Mardol in North Goa on the National Highway No. 4;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the construction project has been included in the Annual Plan for 1998-99;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Details of acquisition of land are as under :

Sr. No.	Date	Area of land acquired
1.	11.11.91	94,226 sqr. Mts.
2.	29.8.97	3,750 sqr. Mts.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise

(e) This work has relatively a low priority in comparison with works included in the 1998-99 Plan keeping in view the limited funds available for development of National Highways.

[Translation]

Changes in Status of Allahabad University

816. SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Uttar Pradesh Government has sent any proposal to declare Allahabad University as a Central University;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be declared as a Central University;

(c) whether any scheme is under consideration of the Government for the development of Allahabad University; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) There has been no recent proposal from the Government of Uttar Pradesh to declare Allahabad University as a Central University. An earlier proposal, mooted by the Allahabad University Teachers' Association in July 1990, and subsequently supported by the Government of U.P. in April 1991, could not be operationalised.

(c) and (d) The various development schemes for Universities are under the purview of UGC, which administers and monitors these schemes.

[English]

Swindling by Egyptian Contactor

817. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Shipping Corporation of India has asked the Indian High Commission in Egypt to help it to reclaim from an Egyptian contractor, nearly seven lakh dollars paid by it for the removal of rubbish/sludge at Port Suez through the fake bills;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reasons for which the Shipping Corporation of India kept on accepting the bills from the Egyptian Contractor for many years;

(d) whether some officials of the Shipping Corporation of India are also involved in this fraud; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard and action taken against them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Shipping Corporation of India Limited (SCI) informed the Indian Embassy at Cairo about the details of the loss of about Rs. 2.40 Crores suffered by SCI for payments made by their Port Said agents to an Egyptian Contactor for removal of rubbish from SCI's vessels transiting through Suez canal. The contractor had been submitting forged 'work done' Certificates. SCI stopped paying such bills as soon as this forgery was detected.

SCI have requested the Indian Embassy at Cairo to help them in recovering this amount.

(d) and (e) The matter is being investigated by Shipping Corporation of India and Ministry of Surface Transport and no conclusion has yet been reached.

[Translation]

Complaint against Distribution of Acknowledgements

818. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Postal Department has received complaints from the senders of registered AD letters that they are not getting acknowledgements of their letters for which they pay additional money; and

(b) if so, the remedial measures taken by the Government so as to ensure that the senders are provided with acknowledgements of their letters?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes Sir. Complaints have been received from some senders of registered letters with acknowledgements about non-receipt of acknowledgement cards.

(b) Such complaints are enquired into promptly and wherever it is found that AD card has not been delivered, an attested copy of addressee's receipt is supplied free of charge. Instructions are issued from time to time to all concerned to ensure proper delivery of Registered letters/Acknowledgement Cards which are also monitored during transmission through post. The Department has improved upon the size and thickness of the AD Card to enable quick identification and their easy handling. Customer Care Centres have been set up in important cities to ensure prompt redressal of grievances including those relating to non-delivery of AD Cards.

Opening of Telephone Exchanges and Post Offices in Sikkim

819. SHRI BHIM DAHAL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of telephone exchanges, post-offices and sub-post-offices opened in Sikkim during the last three years;

(b) the places where telephone exchanges, post-offices and sub-post-offices are proposed to be opened in 1998-99 and the number of proposals under consideration of the Govt. for setting up post-offices and sub-post-offices; and

(c) the time by which these are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) The number of telephone exchanges opened in Sikkim are as under :

Year	No. of exchanges
1995-96	2
1996-97	2
1997-98	6

The information in respect of post offices is at Annexure-I.

(b) The places where telephone exchanges are likely to be opened during 1998-99 are as under :

- (i) Tashiding
- (ii) Lachen
- (iii) Lachung
- (iv) Assamlingzey
- (v) Barmik
- (vi) Magalbari

The information in respect of Post offices is attached as Statement. The above exchanges are likely to be set up by March, 1999. The information in respect of Post offices is given in the attached statement.

Statement

(a) The number of Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices and Departmental Sub Post Offices opened in Sikkim during the last three years are as under :

1995-96		1996-97		1997-98	
EDBO	DSO	EDBO	DSO	EDBO	DSO
-	-	-	-	2	1

(b) The opening of following Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices and Sub Post Offices in Sikkim for 1998-99 are contemplated subject to fulfilment of prescribed norms :

Departmental Sub Post Offices	Extra-Departmental Branch Post Offices
(1) Ravangla	(1) Neya
	(2) Lingzey
	(3) Ahobasti
	(4) Shakhubasti

(c) Post Offices are opened subject to fulfilment of existing norms, availability of resources and Plan target.

Privatisation of Doordarshan

820. SHRI AJIT JOGI : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to privatise/commercialise any channel of Doordarshan;

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

(c) whether any code of conduct has been formulated in this regard;

(d) If so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government have decided to grant permission to hire out Channel-III of Doordarshan to foreign companies;

(f) If so, the reason therefor; and

(g) the extent to which the steps of the Government are likely to affect the other Channels of Doordarshan?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

(e) DD-3 Channel of Doordarshan has been closed down with effect from 16-01-1998.

(f) and (g) Do not arise.

[English]

Curtailment of Powers of TRA

821. SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to curtail the powers of Telecom. Regulatory Authority; and

(b) If so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Telephone Exchanges in M.P.

822. SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of telephone exchanges functioning and proposed to be set up in Madhya Pradesh particularly in Mandala district; and

(b) the time by which these exchanges are likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) and (b) the number of telephone exchanges in Madhya Pradesh and Mandla district is as below :

Madhya Pradesh	—	3119
Mandla District	—	37

The new exchanges are opened as per the existing norms where registered demand exceeds 10. Wherever this condition is met, Exchange is planned and provided expeditiously.

Contact Classes in Hindi

823. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether contact classes for B.C.A./M.C.A. courses in Hindi medium are organised in English medium by Indira Gandhi National Open University, Regional Office, Delhi; and

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to organise contact classes in Hindi medium from this very session for those who tend to undertake correspondence course in the Hindi medium?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) According to the information furnished by the Indira Gandhi National Open University, the Bachelor of Computer Applications (B.C.A.) and the Master's in Computer Applications (M.C.A.) programmes are at present offered by the University through the medium of English. However, the University is exploring the possibility of offering these programmes through the medium of Hindi also.

[English]

Smuggling of Animal Skins

824. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of cases of seizures of animal skins and hides reported in the country during the last three years;

(b) whether such seizures of skins and hides finds their way in Kashmir where their sale is unchecked;

(c) whether any action plan has been worked to check the same; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) The number of cases of seizures of animal skins and hides detected by Regional Offices of Wildlife Preservation of Government of India during the last three years i.e. 1995-98 are as follows :

Centre	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98
Delhi	9	6	5
Calcutta	2	3	28
Chennai	4	1	1
Mumbai	7	5	4

(b) to (d) The Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972 is not applicable to the State of Jammu & Kashmir which has its own Act on Wildlife i.e. Jammu & Kashmir Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1978. The State Government of Jammu & Kashmir has been asked to bring their law at par with that of Government of India. Jammu & Kashmir Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1978 bans hunting of Schedule I species and allows hunting of Schedule II, III & IV species under licence. Some of the rare species like Leopard, Himalayan Black Bear, Himalyan Tahr, Serow, Tibetan Antelope, Wild Yak, Black necked crane etc. which are included in Schedule I of the Central Act are still in Schedule II, III & IV of the J&K Act and trade of these species is allowed in Jammu & Kashmir under this Act.

International Sports Nagari

825. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADODA MANDLIK : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are planning to make an International Sports Nagari in Kolhapur;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No such proposal has been received from the State Government.

Supply of Power to States from CPSU

826. SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the power supplied to State from the Central Power Sector Undertaking (CPSU) during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) whether the outstanding dues against the States have resulted in the reduction of States share in Central Power Projects; and

(c) if so, the details thereof; State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) State-wise entitlement vis-a-vis drawal from Central Power Sector Undertakings during 1995-96 to 1997-98 is given in the attached statement.

(b) and (c) Cabinet have decided that power supply to State Electricity Boards from Central Power Supply Undertakings should only be made against advance payment or Irrevocable Letters of Credit (LC) w.e.f. 01.10.1996.

Cabinet have also decided that the outstanding dues upto 31st December, 1996 against the States for power supplies from the Central Sector Power Projects would be recovered from the Central Plan Assistance (CRA) of the concerned States limited to 15% of the total CPA of the State and the power supply from CPSUs to the States thereafter would be commensurate with the amount of LC opened.

There has been no reduction in share of States from Central Power Projects due to outstanding dues. However, in case of the States where the LC amount is not commensurate with the present allocation of power from CPSUs, the power supply is being regulated or their share is diverted to the States, who enhances the LC commensurate with the additional allocation.

Statement

Supply of Power to States from CPSU

(Figures in MU)

Name of State/System	1995-96		1996-97		1997-98	
	Entitlement	Drawal	Entitlement	Drawal	Entitlement	Drawal
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Nothern Region						
Chandigarh	176.7	181.6	228.4	219.6	307.2	312.1
Delhi	8067.0	7350.1	9304.8	8144.2	10717.5	8804.7
Haryana	5386.8	5961.3	5305.0	5968.6	5967.4	6123.8
Himachal Pradesh	1135.7	917.2	1154.3	1028.8	1419.1	1065.3
J & K	2937.5	2428.9	3155.7	3018.1	4210.4	4103.4
Punjab	5511.8	4465.9	5248.5	5264.0	6647.9	6430.0
Rajaasthan	7445.9	9639.1	7996.6	8512.1	8759.4	9740.3

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Uttar Pradesh	14382.7	14160.0	13913.3	14154.3	13120.2	14589.5
Nepal	-	-	-	-	-	-
Madhya Pradesh	-	-	68.9	65.8	-	-
Total	45044.1	45044.1	46375.5	46375.5	51149.1	51149.1
Western Region						
Gujarat	8633.5	9552.9	8624.2	10151.5	9622.3	10275.7
Madhya Pradesh	10263.8	11096.4	11224.0	11807.0	10886.1	10442.8
Maharashtra	10197.6	8996.6	10403.7	8787.0	10969.1	11061.6
Goa	1223.3	672.3	1259.6	731.0	1203.1	900.5
Total	30318.2	30318.2	31476.5	31476.5	32680.6	32680.6
Southern Region						
Andhra Pradesh	7234.1	7816.2	7417.5	7296.9	7324.9	7295.1
Karnataka	4085.9	4495.0	4681.0	5773.7	4852.9	5119.2
Kerala	2898.8	2737.1	3283.4	3426.0	4113.7	4319.7
Goa	686.0	493.5	600.3	600.3	496.0	496.0
Tamil Nadu	7872.0	7184.4	8516.7	7462.9	8686.2	8243.7
Total	227226.8	22726.8	24498.9	24498.9	25473.7	25473.7
Eastern Region						
Bihar	3080.9	4545.9	3391.7	4459.4	4115.5	4287.3
DVC	1392.4	1867.4	1506.8	2109.7	1555.4	1674.5
Orissa	2501.9	1884.9	2852.4	2180.7	3247.3	2258.7
West Bengal	2935.8	1748.8	2952.4	2000.0	2817.4	2664.2
Sikkim	164.4	28.4	180.4	37.9	208.3	38.4
ASEB	-	-	20.3	42.1	421.8	454.4
APSEB	-	-	39.9	115.1	630.8	668.6
MP/Kerala	-	-	-	-	401.2	1200.00/1516
Total	10075.4	10075.4	10944.9	10944.9	13397.7	13397.7
North-Eastern Region						
Arunachal Pradesh	91.3	54.6	111.1	59.1	116.2	93.5
Assam	645.5	834.5	821.3	1090.7	893.6	1128.5
Manipur	243.3	247.1	286.6	287.3	418.7	398.0
Meghalaya	143.8	11.2	171.9	0.7	185.3	7.5
Mizoram	117.7	114.0	141.2	138.9	110.8	133.6
Nagaland	131.4	126.0	158.0	142.6	145.4	142.3
Tripura	136.4	122.0	161.6	132.4	171.1	137.7
Total	1509.4	1509.4	1851.7	1851.7	2041.1	2041.1

Non-Delivery of Books to National Library

827. SHRI SUBRATA MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether more than half the number of books published in the country are not sent to the National Library in violation of the 'The Delivery of Books' (Public Library) Act; and

(b) if so, the steps the Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) There are no reliable book production statistics available in India. Hence, it is not possible to ascertain the percentage of books sent to National Library, Calcutta, under Delivery of Books' (Public Library) Act.

(b) With a view to make the Act more effective, Government of India (Department of Culture) has taken steps to review the Delivery of Books' Act 1954 through a Committee consisting of representatives of the recipient Libraries, Book Promotion Council, Raja Rammohun Roy National Agency of International Standard Book Number and Indian Federation of Publishers under the Chairmanship of Joint Secretary, Department of Culture.

New Education Policy

828. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to come out with a New Education Policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be announced?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (c) Periodical reviews of the Education Policy have been undertaken in the post-Independence era from time to time. At present, the National Policy on Education (NPE), 1986 as updated in 1992 governs the system of Education. The present Government proposes wider consultations to review the educational policies to incorporate priorities listed in the National Agenda for Governance.

Release of Postage Stamps

829. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAN :
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE :

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received representations for the release of postage stamps from different States;

(b) if so, the details thereof, Statewise;

(c) the dates on which such demands were made earlier in each of the cases;

(d) the reasons for non-release of postage stamps so far in each case; and

(e) the action taken by the Government to fulfil the demand in each case?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) Relevant information is furnished in the Statement.

Statement

Sl. No.	Name of State/ Sponsor	Details Regarding Proposal and date of Receipt	Date on which such Demands were made Earlier	Action Taken
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Gujrat Jt. Sec. Genl. Admn. Dept. Govt. of Gujrat	Release of Stamp on Kalapi- Sursinhi Takhat Sinhji Gohel 09.01.98	No previous Proposal received	Sponsors have been asked to send biographical details of the personality for consideration as per guidelines.
2.	Haryana (a) Secretary Tourism, Govt. of Haryana. (b)-do-	(a) Release of special Stamp on Raja Nahar. 15.05.97 (b) Release of Stamp on Surajkund Crafts Mela. 20.10.97	No previous proposal receive	(a) Stamp released on 09.1.98 Philatelic Advisory (b) To be put up for Philatelic Advisory Committee.

1	2	3	4	5
3.	Maharashtra (a) Genl Admin. Dept. Govt. of Maharashtra (b) -do-	(a) Release of Stamp on Punjab Rao Deshmukh. 06.04.98 (b) Release of Stamp on Sri. G.G. alias Kakasaheb Cholkar, 18.06.97	(b) 08.04.94 (b) 26.08.96	(a) The proposal was not according to guidelines in 1994. This is being considered again. (b) The proposal was con- sidered by the Philatelic Advisory Committee but not recommended.
4.	Tripura Minister of inf. & Cultural Govt. of Tripura	Stamp on themes related to Tripura	21.11.97	The proposal is under consideration
5.	Tamilnadu Sec. Public (Genl-I) Dept. Govt. of TN.	Release of stamp on Sardar A. Vadarathinam. 12.08.97.	15.07.97	The stamp was released on 25.02.98.
6.	West Bengal Mayor, Asansol Mun. Corporation.	Release of Stamp on Kazi Nazrul Islam. 21.07.97	26.04.97	Approved for release in 1999.

Quality of Doordarshan Programmes

830. SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether standard/quality of telecast of programmes on Doordarshan has improved since Prasar Bharati Board has come into existence;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the serials approved by Board have not been provided with final payments to the concerned parties; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) The Prasar Bharati Board has come into existence only on 23.11.97 and it is still too early to make any comment on this.

(d) No, Sir. There is no information to the effect that the Board has approved serials.

(e) Does not arise.

Sister Nivedita's House

831. SHRIMATI KRISHNA BOSE : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any plan of preserving the house where Sister Nivedita lived in

Calcutta and where she started the girls school inspired by Swami Vivekananda;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the Government have any plan to celebrate the centenary of Sister Nivedita's arrival in India?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) The Government have no plans, as of now, to preserve the house in Calcutta associated with Sister Nivedita.

(c) Government support is available to voluntary organisations under the Scheme for Financial Assistance for Centenary and Anniversary Celebrations.

HPT Doordarshan Kendra at Mysore

832. SHRI A. SIDDARAJU : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether High Power T.V. Transmitter was sanctioned for Mysore City;

(b) if so, the estimated cost and the amount so far spent on the said work;

(c) the time by which the above T.V. transmitter is likely to become operational; and

(d) the amount proposed to be spent during 1998-99?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The scheme was sanctioned for the establishment of High Power TV transmitter (HPT) at Mysore at a capital cost of Rs. 969.80 lakhs. An amount of Rs. 24.86 lakhs has already been spent. Installation of this HPT is likely to be completed during 2000 subject to availability of adequate resources and infrastructural facilities. An amount of Rs. 45.00 lakhs is proposed to be spent during 1998-99.

Objectives of CSIR

833. SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether C.S.I.R. which was set up by the Government mainly to check the brain drain has succeeded in its objectives;

(b) if so, the reasons behind the constant increase in the rate of brain drain;

(c) whether C.S.I.R. has any such schemes also so as to ensure the return of the scientific talents in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) The CSIR was set up by the Government in 1942 with a wide ranging charter of functions. The term brain drain at that time was neither in vogue nor a concern. As such it was not one of the functions enjoined on the CSIR.

(b) Government are not aware of any authentic study indicating that there is constant increase in the rate of 'brain drain'.

(c) and (d) In 1958, the Government initiated a scheme to attract back from abroad bright, young, talented Indians qualified in Scientists' Pool. The Scientists' Pool scheme is administered by CSIR. Since its inception around 7000 Indians from abroad have availed of the scheme.

Declaration of Marine Engineering and Research Institute as deemed University

834. SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to declare Marine Engineering and Research Institute, Calcutta as a deemed University;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) to (c) Setting up of an Indian Maritime University comprising all the four Government run Maritime Training Institutes namely, Marine Engineering and Research Institute, Mumbai; Marine Engineering and Research Institute, Calcutta; Lal Bahadur Shastri College of Advanced Maritime Studies & Research, Mumbai; and Training Ship Chanakya, New Mumbai was recommended in May, 1992 by an Expert Committee, designated as Committee on Maritime Education and Training (COMET). An Empowered Committee constituted to examine the COMET recommendations suggested that the proposed University may be set up as a deemed University. During inter-Ministerial consultations, Department of Education stipulated that status of 'deemed University' to the Indian Maritime University could be conferred only after all the four Maritime Institutes are approved by the All India Council of Technical Education. The M.E.R.I., Calcutta, has already been accorded by All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE). Approval in respect of other Institutes is yet to be received.

Higher Call Charges to the Foreign Countries

835. DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Department of Telecommunications and the Videsh Sanchar Nigam Ltd. are charging exorbitant rates from Indian consumers for calls to the foreign countries as brought out in the Patrika from Allahabad dated May 5, 1998;

(b) If so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) whether serious allegations systematic misappropriation and misuse of funds by VSNL have been made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Not applicable.

(c) In view of (a) and (b) above, question does not arise.

(d) Yes. Some complaints regarding misappropriation/misuse of funds by VSNL have been received and the same are still under investigation.

Infrastructure Development of MTPS

836. SHRI SUNIL KHAN : Will the Minister of Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the expenditure incurred for three units and other infrastructural development of Malton Thermal Power Station till date;

(b) the estimated project cost of said Station since its inception; and

(c) the reasons for delay in commissioning of these units?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) Malthen Thermal Power Station is still in the planning stage and as such no expenditure has been incurred for commissioning of units of this project.

[Translation]

Women Literacy

837. SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state the details of the policies adopted to encourage women literacy in the country so far, specially in the areas where the women literacy rate is very low, alongwith the progress made in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : The Total Literacy Campaigns launched by the National Literacy Mission have laid special emphasis on women's mobilisation and participation, particularly in areas with low female literacy. The literacy campaigns aim at creating an environment where women demand knowledge and information. The campaigns made use of a variety of media to spread the message that education of women is a pre-condition for improving their status in society. Gender issues have been suitably incorporated in the literacy primers. Out of the approximately 68.57 million persons made literate through Total Literacy Campaigns so far, approximately 41.14 million are women.

Power Projects in the Country

838. SHRI DATTA MEGHE : Will the Minister of Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of power projects started in the country, State-wise;

(b) the time by which these projects are likely to be completed; and

(c) the extent to which the power generation is likely to be increased on completion of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) to (c) State-wise details of power projects under construction are given below. These projects are at different stages of construction. The completion would depend upon availability of adequate and timely funds, supply and erection of equipments, settlement of inter-state disputes etc.

State	Number	Capacity (MW)
Arunachal Pradesh	1	405
Assam	4	215
Andhra Pradesh	4	1975
Bihar	5	1402
Gujarat	7	2910
Haryana	2	610
Himachal Pradesh	3	1822.5
Jammu & Kashmir	4	511.5
Karnataka	5	1196
Kerala	8	708.25
Maharashtra	8	4814
Manipur	1	36
Madhya Pradesh	6	2975
Nagaland	2	99
Orissa	3	756
Pandicherry	1	32.1
Punjab	2	1020
Rajasthan	1	500
Sikkim	1	60
Tamilnadu	6	815.5
Tripura	1	84
Uttar Pradesh	6	2430
West Bengal	4	2097.5
Total	85	27474.35

[English]

Kendriya Vidyalaya, Moscow

839. SHRI M. RAJAI AH : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the present strength of staff and students in Kendriya Vidyalaya, Moscow;

(b) the number of students studying presently in the school, country-wise;

(c) the details of development which took place in this school since its inception in terms of staff, students and various courses;

(d) whether the Government provide any grant to the Kendriya Vidyalaya, Moscow and have received request from it for allocation of funds;

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the funds to be granted;

(f) the income and expenditure of this school during each of the last three years; and

(g) the status of the staff in comparison with the Embassy Staff at Moscow in terms of salary fixation?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) has intimated that the present strength of staff and students in Kendriya Vidyalaya, Moscow is 31 and 213 respectively.

(b) The present country-wise break-up of students is as under :

1. India	187
2. Nigeria	9
3. Bangladesh	2
4. Pakistan	3
5. Muzambique	4
6. Phillipines	1
7. Zambia	1
8. Srilanka	4
9. Namibia	2

(c) The Kendriya Vidyalaya, Moscow started functioning from 1st September 1987. The Kendriya Vidyalaya runs classes from 1st to XIIth with Science and Humanities stream at +2 stage. In addition, French and Russian are also taught.

(d) and (e) Except the initial grant of Rs. 25 lakhs and a grant of Rs. 500 lakhs for infrastructural facilities provided in 1997-98, no grant has been given in Kendriya Vidyalaya, Moscow as it generates its own resources through tuition fees and pupil's fund.

(f) Receipt and payment during the last three years i.e. 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 in respect of Kendriya Vidyalaya, Moscow is as under :

(Rupees in lakhs)

1994-95		1995-96		1996-97	
Receipt	Payment	Receipt	Payment	Receipt	Payment
145.22	131.99	219.81	180.51	242.08	191.00

(g) The staff of Kendriya Vidyalaya are in the regular pay scales as applicable to their counterparts in India. Foreign Allowances are paid in accordance with the norms prescribed by Ministry of External Affairs.

Constitution of Tribunals for Disposal of Cases

840. SHRI JAYSINHJI CHAUHAN : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE & COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether tribunals have been constituted to dispose of the cases expeditiously;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of pending cases so far, tribunal-wise;

(d) the time by which the pending cases are likely to be disposed of; and

(e) the steps taken/are being taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure effective functioning of these tribunals?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Shifting of Trunk Facility

841. DR. JAYANTA RONGPI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the trunk booking facility has been shifted from Diphu and Hoflong telephone exchanges to Nowgong and Silchar exchanges respectively;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to improve the poor telecommunication facility in the Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills districts of Assam?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In pursuance to a policy decision taken due to sharp fall in trunk traffic consequent to introduction of ISD/NSD and Group dialling facilities and also due to provision of large scale STD/ISD/PCOs, the trunk services have become uneconomical, the Trunk Exchanges in such places are gradually being decommissioned. This is being done only after ensuring continued and efficient trunk call facilities for the users from these areas by connecting such places to the Trunk Centres at the SSA or Revenue Distt. Headquarters through reliable high grade media.

The average number of trunk calls from Haflong and Diphu being very low, it was not found economical to have separate Trunk Exchanges at these two stations. Before decommissioning of the Trunk Exchanges at these places, these stations were connected to Silchar and Nowgong respectively through reliable media to ensure continued and improved Trunk Services to the users from Diphu and Haflong.

(c) All the seven Telephone Exchanges in Karbi Anglong Distt. are electronic and STD facilities have also been provided. One 1000 lines C-DOT SBM has been commissioned at Diphu, the Distt. Headquarter in April, 1998 replacing 652 lines NEAX. This Exchange is further proposed to be expanded by another 400 lines shortly to meet the telephone demand upto March, 1999. Diphu is connected to Jorhat via Dimapur on 60

channel Analog UHF system for STD facilities. Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) link between Diphu and Nowgaon has been planned to be commissioned during the current financial year. With the commissioning of this OFC link, STD services are expected to improve further. Similarly, all the six telephone exchanges in North Cachar District are electronic and having STD facilities. A 1400 lines Electronic Exchanges of C-DOT SBM type has been commissioned at Haflong, the District Headquarter in March, 1998 replacing one 664 lines NEAX. This increased capacity is expected to meet the telephone demand upto March, 1999. Haflong is at present connected to Silchar on 120 Channel Digital UHF system for STD facilities.

The residual open wire carrier system in these two districts of Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills have been planned to be replaced by reliable high grade media progressively and the exchange capacity also would be suitably increased to clear the waiting list to ensure further improvements in the quality of service and augmentation of telecom facilities in due course.

Computerisation of Post Offices in A.P.

842. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to introduce the Computerisation of some major post offices in the Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the total post offices at present computerised;

(c) the extent to which these computerised post offices would help in reducing work load and also cut down delays; and

(d) the number of proposed post offices computerised in the State during 1989-99?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir. AP Postal Circle has introduced computerisation in major Post Offices in the State as a part of plan activity of the Department.

(b) 111 Post Offices.

(c) The computerisation of certain Post Office operations has resulted in speedy disposal of public transactions across the counter. It has also resulted in faster handling of ledger agreement work and generation of interest statements. All these have benefited in reduction of work load and delays.

(d) 15 Post Offices.

Sewage Treatment Plant at Visakhapatnam

843. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the construction of 25 million litres per day sewage treatment plant by the Municipal

Corporation of Visakhapatnam is likely to be delayed by another ten months following objections by the Union Government;

(b) if so, the main objections raised by the Government and the extent to which these have been removed; and

(c) the time by which final clearance is likely to be provided by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) to (c) A proposal of Municipal Corporation of Visakhapatnam for construction of a 25 MLD capacity sewage treatment plant in a Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) area was rejected in July, 1997 by the Ministry. As per the provisions of CRZ notification of February, 1991, construction of sewage treatment plant in CRZ area is a prohibited activity.

Films Manufactured by Foreigners

844. SHRI C.D. GAMIT : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether some foreigners are making feature films in India;

(b) if so, the names of foreigners and the details of procedure on which they were allowed to make feature films in India during the last three years; and

(c) the number of such films and the details of facilities extended to them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Thirty Four foreign film companies were given permission to shoot their films in India during the period from 1.4.95 to 31.3.98.

2. The details of the procedure to be followed by the foreign film companies in order to shoot their films in India are as follows :

3. Proposals for shooting feature films partly or wholly in India by foreigners can be received either directly or through Indian mission abroad. The proposal has to be accompanied by four copies of the detailed script alongwith synopsis, detailed passport particulars of the members of the filming team alongwith the itinerary exact locations where the shooting will take place and equipment to be imported into India on temporary basis.

4. The clearance of the cast and crew and locations is given by the Ministry of Home Affairs. If the shooting is to be done in sensitive areas, then the clearance from Ministry of Defence is also taken. This Ministry clears the scripts and gives the final permission to shoot the film after clearance by Ministry of Home Affairs, other Ministries and concerned State Governments, if necessary.

5. The producer is then required to give a formal undertaking agreeing to adhere to the conditions governing shooting. Briefly, these are as follows :

- (i) The film should be shot according to the script approved by the Government of India. Any material deviation, if considered necessary should be with the prior permission of the Government of India, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
- (ii) Shooting on locations in India is subject to permission being granted by respective controlling authorities.
- (iii) All the shooting has to be done in the presence of a Liaison Officer nominated by this Ministry. The Liaison Officer has to ensure that nothing detrimental to the image of India or the Indian people is shot or included in the film. The Liaison Officer will also travel and stay with the filming team and helps them in obtaining local permissions.
- (iv) The complete film is to be shown to the representative of Government of India in India or Indian Missions abroad before it is released anywhere in the world.

6. Where the film is to be shot as a co-production between a foreign film company and an Indian film company, detailed agreement between both parties clearly indicating the role of each party is required to be furnished for specific clearance.

7. The names of the foreign film companies who have been given permission to make feature films in India during the last three years (1.4.1995 - 31.3.1998) is as under :

S. No.	Name of foreign film production company	Name of the film
1	2	3
1.	M/s. Continental Film Group Ltd., United States of America	Gunga Din
2.	M/s. Walt Disney Pictures, United States of America	Last Dance
3.	M/s. Mirabai Films, United States of America	Tara & Maya
4.	Mr. Ihteshamur Rahman, Bangladesh	Moumachi
5.	M/s. Chargeurs Productions Ltd., United Kingdom	KIM
6.	M/s. Anfri S.r.l., Italy	Sis and the Prince of Dream
7.	M/s. Avenue Pictures, United States of America	Death by Drowning
8.	M/s. Salome, France	The House of the poor.

1	2	3
9.	M/s. Baba Films, United States of America	Thief of Bagdad
10.	Mr. Sirajul Islam, Bangladesh	Bancharar Lorai
11.	M/s. Trial by Fire Films Inc., Canada	Fire
12.	M/s. Titanus, Italy	Sandokans Triumph
13.	M/s. AVM International Film Ltd., United Kingdom	Green Warriors
14.	M/s. J.R. Productions, Canada	Gungapore
15.	M/s. Mowgli Films, France	Who Knows
16.	M/s. B B C, TV, London	Trying to Grow
17.	M/s. AZM Movies, Bangladesh	Rupashi Rajkanya
18.	M/s. Boreales, France	The Monkey who Knew too Much
19.	M/s. Gam Films, Italy	Homer
20.	M/s. S.S. Productions, Dhaka	Swami Keno Ashami
21.	M/s. Studio 'M', Russia	Sidharatha
22.	M/s. Hotsands Ltd, United Kingdom	A son of the Circus
23.	M/s. Yugdu Films, Tashkent, Uzbekistan	Chapani Radj Kapuri
24.	M/s. Royal College of Art, Film and TV, United Kingdom	Sheep Thief
25.	M/s. Dollywood Films, Bangladesh	Charom Shatru
26.	M/s. Bony Pictures, Bangladesh	Moner-Moto Mon
27.	M/s. Produzioni Corsare, Sri, Italy	Garden of Eden
28.	M/s. Amir Hussein Shariffy	Ashubgarahn Earth
29.	M/s Cracking the Earth Films, Canada	Earth
30.	M/s Friends Films, Bangladesh	Raja Rani Badshah
31.	M/s S.S. Poductions, Bangladesh	Myere-O-Manush
32.	M/s Ashirbad Chalachitra, Bangladesh	Hathath Bristli
33.	M/s Tokyo Film Productions, Japan	Pride
34.	M/s. Intesham Enterprises Ltd., Bangladesh	Pardesi Babu

Telecast of Malayalam Programmes on Trivandrum Doordarshan

845. SHRI A.C. JOS : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Malayalam programmes telecasted from Doordarshan Trivandrum on DD-4 are not available at Kochi, the industrial capital of Kerala;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI) : (a) No Sir, these are available. However, since the telecast is via satellite, there is need for an appropriate dish antenna system to receive them.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Lok Adalats in Orissa

846. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE & COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the Lok Adalats organised in Orissa during the last three years;

(b) the number of cases settled in these adalats;

(c) whether the Lok Adalats are getting popular day by day in every State;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to organise some more adalats in every State; and

(e) if so, the steps taken in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : (a) On the basis of the information provided by the Orissa State Legal Services Authority, 201 Lok Adalats were held in 1995, 266 Lok Adalats in 1996 and 236 Lok Adalats in 1997 respectively in the State of Orissa.

(b) 4,72,316 cases were settled in these Lok Adalats.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) The Law Minister's Conference held at New Delhi on 30th June and 1st July, 1997 had decided to organise Intensive Lok Adalats from 15.8.1997 to 15.8.1998. The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) at its first meeting held on 13.9.1997 has decided to have continuous and permanent Lok Adalats. Dr. Justice A.S. Anand, Judge, Supreme Court of India and Executive Chairman, NALSA, has requested the Hon'ble Executive Chairman of the State Legal Services Authorities suggesting establishment of permanent Lok Adalats instead of allowing the Lok Adalats to remain intermittent and occasional in character dealing mainly

with motor accident claim cases with a view to institutionalising the concept of Lok Adalats as also to bring more categories of cases for resolution through Lok Adalats. NALSA is providing funds to almost all the State Legal Services Authorities for organising more and more Lok Adalats and Legal Aid in their State. Hon'ble Executive Chairman, NALSA, is repeatedly pressing the Chief Justices of the State High Courts to settle maximum number of cases through Lok Adalats. Lok Adalats are now another statutory form for settlement of cases and the decrees passed in Lok Adalats have the force of law and finality. Therefore, the Hon'ble Executive Chairman, Dr. Justice A.S. Anand has been propagating resolution of disputes through Lok Adalats.

[Translation]

Air Station in Devas Distt. M.P.-

847. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA VARMA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether not even a single All India Radio relay station has been set up in Southern part of Devas district in Madhya Pradesh comprising Kannad and Khategaon Tehsils;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Union Government propose to set up radio stations in the said area in view of their being neglected so far;

(d) whether the Government propose to conduct any survey for the purpose; and

(e) if so the time by which a radio station is likely to be set up there?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Devas district including its southern parts is fully covered by 100 KW MW transmitter at Indore. Parts of the district are also covered by 200 KW MW transmitter at Jabalpur.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Conversion of LPT into HPT at Porbandar, Gujarat

848. SHRI GORDHANBHAI JADAVBHAI JAVIYA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have received proposal from Government of Gujarat to convert the

Low Power Transmitter (LPT) into a High Power Transmitter (HPT) at Porbandar and to change the locations of some of the HPTs in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) No request for upgradation of Low Power TV Transmitter (LPT), Porbandar into High Power TV Transmitter (HPT) was received from Government of Gujarat. A proposal for rectification of technical fault of High Power TV Transmitter (HPT) at Dwarka by shifting its location was received from Government of Gujarat.

Setting up of HPT, Dwarka at a new site is envisaged to be taken up during the Ninth Plan subject to availability of infrastructural facilities and resources.

Closing down of Kendriya Vidyalaya

849. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have decided to close Kendriya Vidyalaya at Kasaragod in Kerala;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of representations received against the closure move; and

(d) the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Five representations, including one each from a Member of Parliament and a former Minister of State have been received against the closure move.

[Translation]

Losses of SEBs

850. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether most of the electricity boards are running at a loss and crores of rupees are outstanding against the public sector undertakings such as NTPC, Coal India Ltd., Railways, etc.

(b) if so, the details of the losses suffered by the State Electricity Boards during the last three years and outstanding dues against the public sector undertakings; and

(c) the main reasons for suffering such huge losses by SEBs?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The surplus/deficit of the SEBs during 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97 are enclosed Statement-I. A Statement indicating the outstanding dues of the Central Power Undertakings against SEBs etc., as on 31.1.1998 is enclosed Statement-II.

(c) The main reasons of the losses of the SEBs, *inter alia*, include, the widening gap between the average cost of supply and realisation, delay as well as inadequate revision of tariff; non realisation of the dues by SEBs for sale of power; low levels of capacity utilisation of existing plants and high transmission and distribution losses.

Statement-I

Statement showing the surplus/deficit of the SEBs during the years 1994-95, 1995-96 and 1996-97

(Rs. in crores)

S.No.	Name of the SEB	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
1	2	3	4	5
1.	A.P.	-857.04	-1128.58	-721.27 (A)
2.	Bihar	-300.11	-27.52	-27.52 (P)
3.	Gujarat	-550.28	-1003.39	-953.43 (U)
4.	Haryana	-98.92	-536.59	-593.98 (A)
5.	H.P.	17.67	35.53	24.81 (A)
6.	Karnataka	-164.18	-499.41	-646.48 (U)
7.	Kerala	13.32	-30.48	-223.12 (U)
8.	M.P.	-382.40	-458.46	-210.91 (U)
9.	Maharashtra	320.75	-280.24	87.69 (A)
10.	Orissa	-136.08	-230.68	-230.68 (P)
11.	Punjab	-427.48	-325.64	-295.91 (U)
12.	Rajasthan	-412.75	-343.87	-343.87 (P)
13.	Tamil Nadu	-2.31	-76.74	-257.28 (U)
14.	Uttar Pradesh	-978.25	-1495.00	-1194.25 (A)
15.	W.B.	-78.66	-64.49	-227.27 (U)
16.	Assam	-296.90	-261.46	-411.05 (U)
17.	Meghalaya	-27.18	-21.66	-42.02 (U)
Total		-4360.80	-6748.68	-6266.54

A - Audited

U - Unaudited

P - Provisional

Statement-II

Outstanding dues payable to Central Sector Power Corporation and on 31st January, 1998

S.No.	SEBs/Stares	REC 01/98	NTPC 01/98	NEEPCO 01/98	DVC 01/98	NHPC 01/98	PFC 01/98	PGS 01/98
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.	Andhra Pradesh	208.38	225.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	128.48	34.58
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00	3.72	0.00	0.58	0.00	0.58
3.	Assam	80.03	2.21	127.55	1.70	-0.28	0.00	18.10
4.	Bihar	314.43	1006.99	0.00	975.36	0.24	0.67	10.69
5.	Gujarat	0.30	208.47	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	3.52
6.	Goa	0.00	7.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.36
7.	Haryana	40.90	247.77	0.00	0.00	386.55	0.00	22.16
8.	Himachal Pradesh	0.56	28.95	0.00	0.00	18.00	0.00	0.50
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	0.08	385.22	0.00	0.00	36.41	0.00	20.34
10.	Karnataka	7.33	79.99	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	15.72
11.	Kerala	0.13	47.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.43
12.	Madhya Pradesh	434.78	409.43	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6.19
13.	Maharashtra	0.00	229.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.28
14.	Manipur	4.99	0.00	21.09	0.00	1.62	0.65	3.85
15.	Meghalaya	8.39	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.69	0.00	0.55
16.	Mizoram	0.00	0.00	4.09	0.00	0.15	3.59	1.91
17.	Nagaland	0.00	0.00	12.41	0.00	2.35	0.17	2.05
18.	Orissa (GRIDCO)	90.50	276.07	0.00	0.00	0.87	14.65	4.84
19.	Punjab	0.28	32.32	0.00	0.00	92.84	0.00	10.10
20.	Rajasthan	31.03	81.84	0.00	0.00	18.05	0.00	29.79
21.	Sikkim	0.21	7.38	0.00	0.00	-0.09	0.00	2.96
22.	Tamil Nadu	2.80	56.81	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.35
23.	Tripura	0.34	0.00	1.64	0.00	0.49	0.00	0.02
24.	Uttar Pradesh	551.63	1309.75	0.00	0.00	445.77	0.00	254.49
25.	West Bengal	297.78	412.84	0.00	369.16	0.00	21.47	25.16
26.	DVB (DESU)	0.00	333.57	0.00	0.00	137.01	0.00	35.43
27.	DVC	0.00	277.40	0.00	0.00	0.61	0.00	6.93
28.	DNH	0.00	0.35	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.17
29.	UTC	0.00	1.65	0.00	0.00	3.64	0.00	0.27
30.	Neepco	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.92	0.00	0.00
31.	Daman & Diu	0.00	4.37	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.13
32.	Pondicherry	0.00	3.60	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.37
33.	Cooperatives	7.71	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
34.	State Govts.	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
35.	Power Grid	0.00	5.39	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
36.	Others (wind)	1.72	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total		2084.31	6681.80	170.50	1346.22	1145.44	169.68	541.14

Cumulative as on 31st January, 1998 : Rs. 12,139.09 crores.

Development of Postal Services

851. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the department of communications do not have any research and development programme for the development of technology in the field of post;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) to (c) The Department of Posts has a Technology Division which interacts and co-ordinates with institutes of excellences like IITs and specialised departments like Department of Electronics and others for the purpose of evolving suitable technology for postal services. The programmes are formalised in the form of plan projects under the over all Five Year Plans.

Environment Commission

852. SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI :
SHRI MAHESH KANODIA :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have proposed to establish Environment Commission for the speedy disposal of matters related to the Environment;

(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 ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Boycott of Examinations

853. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY :
SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :
SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the teachers of Delhi University had recently boycotted the examinations;

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

(c) the action taken/proposed to be taken against them; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken in the light of this agitation to ensure the smooth functioning of educational institutions?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (d) The Delhi University Teachers Association (DUTA), some time back, had given a call for boycott of the

examinations of the University of Delhi to press their demand regarding revision of pay scales of university and college teachers. The Government have already announced certain pay-structure against which DUTA and other teachers' associations have filed their representations. The agitation of the university teachers on the pay-revision issue has also become a subject matter of litigation before the Delhi High Court. While the Court proceedings are going on, the Government has been having dialogues with all concerned agencies to find an acceptable solution.

Telephone Exchanges

854. SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the data on which the construction work of new telephone exchange was taken up in Kawardha Tehsil of Rajnandgaon district and the time by which it is likely to be completed;

(b) the details of its capacity alongwith its cost of installation;

(c) the extent to which it can be expanded in future;

(d) whether there is any scheme to instal electronic telephone exchanges in Dogargarh and Dongargaon Tehsils of this district;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether any letter/memorandum has been received in the department during April, 1998 regarding faulty telephone system of tribal development block, Mohla; and

(g) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) 1. The date of commencement construction of building 15-12-95.

2. Date of completion of building 06-03-98. (6.9.98)

3. Date of commissioning of Telephone exchange 29-03-98.

(b) The capacity of exchange 1000 lines.

Cost of Installation

(i) Building 29.6 lakhs.

(ii) Telephone exchange 219.2 lakhs.

(c) Up to 1400 lines.

(d) Electronic exchanges are already installed at Dogargarh and Dongargaon Tehsils.

(e) Details of working exchanges are as under :-

S.No.	Tehsil	Capacity	DEL	W/L
1.	Dogargarh	680	649	36
2.	Dongargaon	184	147	0

(f) Yes, Sir.

(g) As indicated in the attached Statement.

Statement

Details of Memorandum and corrective action taken

Points in the memorandum	Action taken
(1) At present the telephone subscribers are only being provided with consolidated bills. The subscribers has been demanding details of the STD calls made by them.	The exchange installed at Mohlia does not have Technical facility to provide detailed billing. Such Technical facility is generally available in bigger Telephone Systems.
(2) There is an echo in the line whenever a call is received and as a result there is disturbance and the speech is not audible.	The satellite link was having echo problem which has since been rectified.
(3) The cable at the pillar had broken off in May'97. It nearly a year now and the cable has not been repaired, on the cable has been joined with a tape.	The cable at the pillar has been attended to.
(4) There is no Telegraph office (to receive telegrams) at Mohlia and as a result the telegrams have to be received and routed through Ambargarh Chowki which is time consuming.	Telegraph services at Mohlia is provided through a combined Post Office. The Postal Department has been requested to ensure prompt booking and delivery of Telegrams.

Inclusion of Environment Protection in Syllabus

855. SHRI PANKAJ CHOUDHRY :
SHRI RAMPAL SINGH :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to include environment protection as a compulsory subject in the syllabus of schools/colleges;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

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

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) Environmental protection has always been an integral part of the school curricula developed by NCERT at every stage of school education. The National Policy on Education adopted in 1986 (and modified in 1992) identified protection of the environment as one of the components of core curriculum to be followed throughout the country. It has been emphasized in the National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education—A Framework brought out by NCERT in 1988 and the Guidelines and Syllabuses for various stages of school education in different subjects as well as the textbooks which NCERT brought out. Environment protection has, thus, already become a major component of school curriculum syllabuses and textbooks and the work in this area has progressed far beyond the stage of a proposal.

There is no proposal with the University Grants Commission to include Environmental protection as a

compulsory subject in the syllabus of colleges. However, the University Grants Commission has introduced Environment Science as one of the subjects under the scheme of Vocational Courses in the area of Environment and Water Management at the first degree level in the universities and colleges. 11 colleges have been assisted so far. As a follow-up action on the Supreme Court judgement in November, 1991 the UGC is providing financial assistance to selected universities/colleges for introduction of an optimal/special paper in Environment Science at Post Graduate level under the scheme of assistance to Courses in Emerging areas. So far, the UGC has provided assistance to 70 universities/colleges for implementing this programme.

(b) and (c) : Do not arise.

Amendments to Basel Ban

856. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India, at the Fourth Conference on trans-boundary movement of hazardous waste held at Kuching, Malaysia, had indicated its plan to ratify the historic 1995 amendments to the "Basel Ban", pending adoption of the list of hazardous wastes prepared by the technical working group;

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

(c) whether the Organisation for Economic Cooperation of Developed countries has been trying to scuttle or delay the ban; and

(d) the steps being taken to effectively prevent the exports of such wastes to India, indicating the actual

exports of such wastes into India from various countries during 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) to (c) In the address delivered by India at the Fourth Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal held at Kuching, Malaysia from February 23-27, 1998 it was indicated that India is taking steps to ratify the amendments to the Basel Convention. The proposal to amend the Basel Convention to include the lists of wastes—List 'A' and List 'B' prepared by the Technical Working Group as Annex VIII and IX to the Convention, which defines hazardous wastes, was jointly presented by the European Union and Chile to the fourth Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention. Many European countries are part of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation of Developed countries.

(d) As per rule 11 of the Hazardous Wastes (Management & Handling) Rules, 1989, imports of hazardous wastes from any country to India is not permitted for dumping and disposal. However, import of such wastes may be allowed for processing or reuse as raw material after examining each case on merit. From April 1995 with the amendments to the EXIM Policy, import of hazardous wastes has been restricted to actual users with an import licence. Vide order dated 5.5.1997, the Supreme Court of India in a public interest litigation Writ Petition No. 967/95—Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology versus Union of India and Others ordered that no authorization/permission should be given by any authority for the import which have already been banned by the Central Government or by any order made by any Court or any authority. 7 permission for imports of hazardous wastes have been granted so far from 1989 till 1996. 2 permissions have been granted for negotiation in 1998. Details are given in the attached statement.

Statement

S.No.	Importer	Exporting Country	Quantity & Waste to be imported	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5
1.	M/s Balmer Lawrie & Co., Calcutta	Dubai	150 KL, Waste Oil December, 1993	One time permission granted for R&D Project
2.	M/s Southern Refineries Ltd., Trivandrum	U.K.	8000 Barrels of waste oil, 1994	For trial run to demonstrated waste oil re-refining by vaccum distillation technology
3.	M/s Zinc Smelters & Refiners India Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai	Germany	20,000 MT, Zinc containing residual dusts on 20 th June, 1994	Steel mill dust
4.	M/s Bharat Zinc Ltd., Bhopal	Germany, The Netherlands & Sweden	14,100 MT Zinc wastes on 12.5.95.	On 8.8.94 with the condition that clearance would be sought on each consignment. Permission for negotiation of 17,000 MT Zinc ash/residue/dross scrap was granted.
5.	M/s Indo-Zinc Ltd., Dhar, M.P.	The Netherlands	1,000 MT, Zinc ash/dross/scrap, 8.5.95	Permission for import
6.	M/s Associated Pigments Ltd., Calcutta	South Korea	3,500 MT, Lead waste dross/residue/scrap, December 1995	Permission was granted as per the recommendations of the Committee.

1	2	3	4	5
7.	M/s India Lead Ltd., Mumbai	—	Lead dross/residue/ scrap, Nov., 1995	Permission granted only to negotiate the import for use in their Thane unit as per the recommendations of the Committee.
8.	M/s Tirupati Chemicals Ltd., Malerkotla, Pb.	—	Zinc ash/skimmings, 1998	Permission granted for negotiations
9.	M/s Bharat Zinc Ltd., Bhopal	—	Brass dross/copper dross, 1998	Permission granted for negotiations

1. All imports were permitted subject to the requirements under Hazardous Wastes (Management & Handling) Rules, 1989.

Transportation by Road

857. SHRI CHINTA MOHAN

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the estimated share of road traffic in the total goods and passenger traffic at the end of Eighth Five Year Plan, Separately;

(b) whether in view of the increasing number of vehicles, the present network of roads becoming inadequate; and

(c) if so, the disadvantages due to the shortage of roads and the annual estimated financial loss to the country as a result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) According to a study conducted by Planning Commission, estimates for road-rail traffic during 1986/87 and projection for 1999-2000 based on the prevailing trend are as follows :

		1986-87	1999-2000
Freight	Road	210	374
(BTK)	Rail	223	686
Passenger	Road	256	446
(BPK)	Rail	893	2916

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Capacity shortage, delays in transportation, increased transportation operating cost and poor roads resulting in increased in fuel consumption in the range of 10-15% causing annual loss of approximately Rs. 3000 to 4000 crores.

Chandra Shekhar Azad

858. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :

SHRI MOHAN SINGH :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the name of Chandra Shekhar Azad, a great patriot and one of the heroes of the country's freedom struggle finds a place only as a footnote in the Indian History text books;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to reassess his contribution towards the country's freedom struggle in order to give him a deserving place in the Indian History; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOJHAR JOSHI) : (a) The contribution of the great revolutionary Chandra Shekhar Azad is brought out adequately in the textbooks prepared by the NCERT. He is referred to in the history textbooks in the context of the description of India's struggle for freedom. In these textbooks, the role of individual leaders, including Chandra Shekhar Azad is mainly referred to in the context of major developments & trends.

(b) and (c) The role of Chandra Shekhar Azad is well known and widely acknowledged.

Environmental Clearance For Mining

859. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) the details and the number of applications received during last three years for the Environmental clearance for the proposed mining in South India; and

(b) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) A Statement is annexed.

Statement

S.No.	Name of the Project	Date of receipt	Status of the Project
1	2	3	4
ANDHRA PRADESH			
1.	Tummal Penta Limestone Line of M/s Larsen & Turbo Ltd., Distt. Kurnool	10.11.95	Environmental clearance
2.	Bhimili Beach Sand Project of M/s Indian Rare Earths Ltd., Village Kubella, Distt. Vizianararam	14.3.96	Forestry details not furnished by the State Government.
3.	Limestone opencast mining project of M/s Deccan Cements, Distt. Bhavanipuram	17.2.97	Additional information not received from the project authorities.
4.	Limestone mining project of M/s Nagarunjana Construction Co. Ltd., Distt. Kurnool	30.12.97	Under process
KARNATAKA			
5.	Quartz mine of M/s Sandur Manganese and Iron Ore Ltd.	18.4.95	Additional information on forestry aspects from the State Government not received.
6.	Dodkanya Manganosite & Dunite Mine of M/s Tata Iron & Steel Co., Distt., Mysore	15.6.95	Environmental clearance accorded on 30.9.96
7.	Jaisingput Iron Ore Project of M/s P. Abubakar, Bellary Distt.	28.8.95	Under process.
8.	Kemngundi Iron Ore Mines of M/s Steel Authority of India Ltd., Distt. Chikmagalur	22.2.96	Environmental clearance accorded on 6.11.96
9.	Ajjahnalli Gold Mining Project of M/s Hutti Gold Mines	30.12.97	Under process.
TAMIL NADU			
10.	Limestone mine of M/s Madurai Cement Pvt. Ltd.	27.7.95	Environmental clearance accorded on 13.1.98
11.	Kudralmazhi Project of M/s Indian Rare Earths Ltd., Chidambarnagar	14.3.96	Forestry details not received from the States Government
12.	Alathiyar limestone mining project of M/s Madras Cements Ltd.	4.4.96	Environmental clearance accorded on 24.10.96
13.	Adanakurichi limestone Mine of M/s India Cement, Distt. Perambur, Tiruvallabar	44.96	Environmental clearance accorded on 31.10.96
14.	Transworld Garnet Sand Mining Project, Karuichithu Kottaboman Distt.	3.9.97	Environmental clearance accorded on 30.9.97.

Separate Postal Accounts Office for NER

860. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government propose to consider the establishment of a separate postal accounts office for the North-East Region;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be established alongwith its proposed locations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Heads of West Bengal and North East Postal Circles have been asked to prepare and submit a comprehensive proposal for bifurcation of work of Postal Accounts Office, Calcutta with a view to creating a separate Postal Accounts Office for North East Circle.

(c) For establishing Postal Accounts Office for North East Circle no time frame has been fixed.

As regards location, it has been the general practice to locate the office at the respective Postal Circle headquarters.

[English]

Rakesh Mohan Committee Report

861. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMAWAR :
SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL :

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have received Rakesh Mohan Committee Report to suggest structural modifications in the existing set up to streamline administration etc.;

(b) if so, the details of the recommendations made by the Committee and reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the National Highway Board of national level is likely to be set up to facilitate planning and time bound implementation of highway programme, mobilise the required private fund from domestic and international markets and maintain and massage National and State Highways; and

(d) the details of performance achieved upto March 31, 1998 in regard to the National/ State Highways and the action plan for the current year with State-wise break-up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) Among the various recommendations made in the Rakesh Mohan Committee Report the following were accepted in respect of National Highways:

(i) Bankable projects relating to bypass, bridges, road over bridges and 4-laning of National Highways to be built through private sector.

(ii) Highway development policy has been adopted.

(iii) Comprehensive guidelines and procedures for awarding works to private sector approved.

(c) The proposal is at conceptual stage.

(d) Under the Constitution, the National Highways are the responsibility of the Central Government while the State Highways that of the concerned State Government. For the year 1997-98, a sum of Rs. 551.24 crores was allocated for development works on National Highways as per distribution to the various States given in the Statement enclosed. The entire sum has been utilised. As regards the current year, the budget is yet to be approved by Parliament, thereafter the action plan will be drawn up.

Statement

Sl No.	Name of State/ UTs.	National Highway (Original) Works during 1997-98
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2949.83
2.	Arunachal Pr.	0.00
3.	Assam	1821.00
4.	A & N. Island	0.00
5.	Bihar	1900.00
6.	Chandigarh	30.00
7.	Delhi	800.00
8.	Goa	900.00
9.	Gujarat	3675.00
10.	Haryana	1100.00
11.	Himachal Pr.	1700.00
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	150.00
13.	Karnataka	2900.00
14.	Kerala	3600.00
15.	Madhya Pradesh	1700.00
16.	Maharashtra	2900.00
17.	Manipur	700.00
18.	Meghalaya	920.00
19.	Mizoram	0.00
20.	Nagaland	100.00

1	2	3
21.	Orissa	2600.00
22.	Pondicherry	70.00
23.	Punjab	1300.00
24.	Rajasthan	2550.00
25.	Sikkim	0.00
26.	Tamil Nadu	2500.00
27.	Tripura	0.00
28.	Uttar Pradesh	4008.00
29.	West Bengal	5375.00
30.	Joggigappa Bridge	1244.00
31.	Ministry	0.17
32.	BRDB	7031.00
33.	NHAI	0.00
34.	Other Institutions	0.00
Total		55124.00

Cheating in CBSE Examination

862. SHRI C.P.M. GIRIYAPPA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the several Centres of CBSE examination, 1998 for X and XII the students were allegedly allowed to cheat in examination hall for Rs. 1000/-;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether complaints have been received in this regard; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to curb this menace?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) to (d) As per information received from the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), only one complaint was received from an individual alleging that Class XII students at one particular examination centre were allowed to indulge in copying against the payment of Rs. 1000/- each. On investigation of the complaint by the CBSE, the allegation was found to be incorrect and baseless.

Shortage of Power in Rajasthan

863. COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that due to non-availability of power, Jaisalmer and Barmer districts of Rajasthan

are still under developed even after 50 years of Independence;

(b) whether Central Electricity Authority have cleared remaining project reports for 125 MW capacity Gas Turbine for recovery waste heat proposed to be installed after commitment of additional Gas from Gas Authority of India Limited;

(c) whether the additional requirement of Gas has been registered with the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas after Gas availability indication given by Oil India in Jaisalmer; and

(d) the likely date by which the additional requirement of funds totalling Rs. 350 crores would be made available?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) During 1997-98, Rajasthan experienced a power shortage of only 1.8% as against 5.1% in the northern region and 8.1% in the country as a whole.

(b) Based on the firm availability of gas, Rajasthan State Electricity Board (RSEB) formulated a proposal for 35.5 MW gas turbine project at Ramgarh in District Jaisalmer, which was techno-economically cleared by Central Electricity (CEA) on 8.4.1993 at an estimated cost of Rs. 120.83 crores. In May 1998, RSEB has forwarded a proposal to instal 1 x 35.5 MW GT + 1 x 35.5 MW ST at Ramgarh TPP to CEA.

(c) Rajasthan Government has requested the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas for allocation of additional gas to GTPP Ramgarh.

(d) The project is to be executed in the State sector and would be financed mainly by the State Government (RSEB). Loan assistance from Power Finance Corporation and other financial institutions has also been proposed.

Plan for Children

864. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have prepared any plan for the hope and aspirations of the nation, vested in children, the future of India, on the occasion of Golden Jubilee of India's independence;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

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

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : (a) and (b) The Department of Women & Child

Development, Government of India sponsored a National Children's Festival at New Delhi from 2nd to 10th October, 1997. The National Children's Festival was organised with a view to promote the full participation of children in the golden jubilee celebrations of India's independence; pay tribute to freedom fighters and national leaders, to instill the vision of greatness cherished by our Founding Fathers, to inculcate a sense of self discipline to interaction, competition and integration; to provide a platform to children for mutual appreciation of India's great socio-cultural diversity, create an environment to strengthen the bonds of friendship and unity amongst children of different States and Union Territories; identify exceptional children in rural areas, urban slums and among children with disabilities in the areas of fine and performing arts, craft work, painting, vocal and instrumental music etc., including sensitising children on socially relevant issues. Children representing 24 States/UTs participated in the festival.

As part of the Golden Jubilee anniversary celebrations, the Government has also launched the Balika Samridhi Yojana, a Scheme to raise the statue of the Girl Child.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Does not arise.

Large scale felling of Trees at Tilpat

865. SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN :
SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news item captioned "IAF fells 4.9 lakh trees, to cut lakhs more" appearing in the *Pioneer* dated May 5, 1998;

(b) whether such large scale deforestation drive was carried out without mandatory sanction of his Ministry or that of the Ministry of Defence;

(c) if so, the steps proposed to protect the environment from such large scale disaster; and

(d) the punitive steps contemplated against the personnel responsible for such environmental vandalism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) Yes, Sir, the Government is aware of the news item.

(b) As intimated by the Air Force authorities, it is incorrect that the Indian Air Force had bulldozed 520 acres area at Tilpat firing range and destroyed 14 lakh trees. Tilpat firing range encompasses an area of

approximately 4000 acres. Tilpat range is Air Force land and was cleared of bushes and other vegetation in view of flight safety. Generally no bush or tree is allowed to grow in a firing range area as the vegetation attracts birds of all kinds. When aircrafts are involved in firing of weapons on a firing range such as Tilpat they have to fly down to low heights at a high speed upto 1000 km per hour and any birds in the area can be extremely hazardous to aircraft. This firing range was being sparingly used since 1989 and due to this lot of wild bushes have grown in the area. In 1997, it was decided to reactivate it for practising weapon firing by both helicopters and fighter aircraft. Since the range was not in use for last many years, a large number of wild growth of kikker bushes and small trees had grown over this area and there were a number of unauthorised encroachments. With the help of civil courts and district authorities the area was cleared of encroachments in 1997. To make it fit for practising weapon firing it was cleared of wild vegetation.

Since land in question belong to the Ministry of Defence no permission of Ministry of Environment & Forests is necessary for clearing the wild growth of bushes and trees on such lands. The matter regarding use of Tilpat firing range falls within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Defence.

(c) and (d) Question does not arise in view of (b) above.

[Translation]

Hirakund Hydel Power Project in Orissa

866. SHRI ASHOK ARGAL : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) the share of Madhya Pradesh in the power generated by Hirakund Hydel Power Project in Orissa;

(b) whether the Orissa Government is paying the compensation amount for not supplying of the allotted share of power to Madhya Pradesh; and

(c) if not, the amount outstanding against Orissa Government and the action likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : (a) The share of Madhya Pradesh in the power generated by Hirakund hydel power project in Orissa is 5 MW.

(b) No. Sir. The Orissa Government is not paying any compensation for non supply of Madhya Pradesh's share.

(c) The amount outstanding as at the end of April 1998 is Rs. 30.24 cores. The time frame for payment of dues will have to be settled mutually by the two State Governments.

[English]

**Funds for Development of National
Highways in Kerala**

867. SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Kerala has made any request during current year to allot funds for the development of National Highways in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the amount proposed to be allotted by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The State Government has requested for a minimum allotment of Rs. 120 crores. The final allocation of the NH sector for 1998-99 is yet to be approved by the Parliament. Based on the final approval, allotment to various States including Kerala would be decided.

[Translation]

**International Financial Assistance For
Bridges/Roads in Bihar**

868. SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether some international financial organisations are giving financial assistance to Bihar for construction of bridge and roads;

(b) if so, the details regarding length and names of roads/bridges to be constructed;

(c) the names of the financial organisations are giving financial assistance to Bihar for construction of bridges and roads; and

(d) the time schedule regarding completion of construction work of these roads and bridges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) :

(a) Yes, Sir. World Bank and Asian Development Bank are providing loans for development of roads and bridges in the State of Bihar.

(b) to (d) Details of the projects are as under :

Name of the Project	Length of Bridge and Road	Target date of completion	Amount of loan assistance
I. World Bank			
1. Bhagalpur Bridge and approach roads	Length of Bridge about 4367 metres. Length of approach Roads-about 10.6 kms.	June 2000	US Dollar 23.6 Million (approx)
Roads and Bridges under Bihar Plateau Development Project.	Total length of Bridges 10,000 metres (approx) Length of roads-about 1200 Kms.	June, 2000	Project cost of road and bridge works Rs. 270 crores (approx.) ; included in the loan amount US Dollar 117 million for several project.
II. Asian Development Bank			
Four laning and strengthening of Barwa Adda (km 398.75) to Barakar (KM 441.44) Section of NH 2.	About 46 Kms.	June, 2000	Project cost Rs. 128 crores (approx.); included under Third loan of US Dollar 245 million which covers projects in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Hayrana, Rajasthan and West Bengal.

*[English]***Allotment of Telephone Booths in West Bengal**

869. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of applications lying pending for STD/ISD telephone booths in the all telecommunications circles of West Bengal, circle-wise;

(b) the names of circles for which advisory committees have been set up for the allotment of such booths;

(c) the number of persons who applied for such booths from North Bengal areas of West Bengal during the last three year; and

(d) the reasons for not sanctioning such booths in districts of North Bengal areas to various applicants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA) : (a) 5906 applications are pending for STD/ISD telephone booths in West Bengal Circle (Statement enclosed).

(b) STD PCO Allotment Committees have been set up in respect of each Secondary Switching Area (SSA) in all the telecom circles consisting of 2 official members. The non-official members on each are nominated by the M.Ps. The M.Ps of XIIth Lok Sabha of that constituency have been addressed to nominate non-official members. Nominations of MPs of Rajya Sabha already exist.

(c) 3721 persons have applied for allotment of STD PCO booths from North Bengal during the last three years.

(d) In North Bengal area, only 1431 applications are pending for allotment of STD PCO booths. These are pending due to various reasons such as non-availability of exchange capacity, inadequate STD junctions etc.

Statement

SSA	Number of applications for STD/ISD booths pending as on 30.4.98
Asansol	362
Bankura	140
Calcutta	1532
Berhampur	300
Jalpaiguri	465
Kharagpur	214
Krishnagar	1750
Malda	150
Purulia	67
Raigang	134
Siliguri	682
Suri	110
Total	5906

Development of Primary Education

870. SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL :
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK :
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBHA MANDLIK :
SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state the percentage of allocation of funds made for the development of primary education during the last year as well as current year, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : The information is being collected from the State Governments and will be laid on the Table of the Sabhe.

New Forest and Environment Policy

871. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the progress achieved under New forest and Environment Policy is far from satisfactory;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of fresh policy initiatives announced under consideration to deal with the problem during 1998-99 and Ninth Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : (a) and (b) At present, there is no proposal for preparing a New Forest and Environment Policy. However, the Government policy on environment and forests has been enunciated in the National Conservation Strategy and Policy Statement on Environment and Development (1992), Policy Statement for Abatement of Pollution (1992) and the National Forest Policy (1988).

(c) The Government do not propose any new environment and forests policy.

Constitution Review Commission

872. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA
PROF. P.J. KURIEN
SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA
SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up a Constitution Review Commission; and

(b) if so, the purpose of constituting such a commission?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M THAMBI DURAI) : (a) and (b) The Government has so far not taken any decision.

12.01 hrs.

**RE: ASSAULT ON INDIAN DIPLOMAT IN
ISLAMABAD**

[English]

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR (Baramati) : Mr. Speaker Sir, I just want to raise a small but very important issue. It is reported day before yesterday that an Indian Diplomat, Shri Rawat had been beaten in Islamabad.

This is not the first instance of its kind in Pakistan. It is the responsibility of the respective Government to provide full security and protection to all diplomats. But this is happening. The action against Shri Rawat was uncivilised and criminal. I think, it is high time that the Government of India took note of this particular incident very seriously and if possible, the hon. Minister should make a statement on this.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : Sir, in reply to what the Leader of Opposition has just now said, I would like to make a statement.

Shri B.S. Rawat, Attache in our High Commission in Islamabad was assaulted and badly beaten in front of his residence in Islamabad on the morning of May 31, 1998. Shri Rawat was walking from his residence to the house of his colleague when an individual, purportedly a Security Guard of a neighbouring house accosted him and beat him up with a lathi.

Shri Rawat suffered serious injuries including head injuries and fractures in both of his arms. He has been hospitalised and is recovering. The circumstances of the assault are very disturbing.

The High Commissioner of Pakistan was summoned to the Foreign Office yesterday. Our Foreign Secretary lodged a strong protest at this very serious and abnormal incident which is completely unacceptable. The High Commissioner has been told that the security of our Mission is the responsibility of Pakistan and clearly the Pakistani authorities failed in providing the required security because of which this incident occurred. The High Commissioner was asked to convey our protest to his Government and it is demanded that Pakistan ensures that full security is provided to our Mission personnel. The Pakistan High Commissioner, while stating that his Government was providing security to our personnel and that this incident was only an individual occurrence, expressed regret. He also assured that a full investigation would take place.

The security of our Mission in Pakistan remains a matter of concern. We will continue to demand of Pakistan that it fulfils its obligations under International Conventions and the bilateral code of conduct in ensuring full security to our Mission in Islamabad.

12.03 hrs.

[Translation]

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

Annual Report, Annual Accounts and Review by the Government of the working of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi.

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY : (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi, for the year 1995-96.
- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi, for the year 1995-96 together with Audit Report thereon.
- (iii) Statement (Hindi and English versions) regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, New Delhi, for the year 1995-96.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 248/98]

Annual Report and Review by the Government of the working of the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Ltd., Tehri, National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Ltd. etc.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : Sir I beg to lay on the Table

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions under sub-section (I) of Section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956;
 - (a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Limited, Tehri, for the year 1996-97.
 - (ii) Annual Report of the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Limited, Tehri, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts and Comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 249/98]

- (b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited, Faridabad, for the year 1996-97.
- (ii) Annual Report of the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited, Faridabad, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts and Comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 250/98]
- (c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97.
- (ii) Annual Report of the National Thermal Power Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 251/98]
- (d) (i) Review by the Government of the Working of the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 252/98]
- (e) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited, Shillong, for the year 1996-97.
- (ii) Annual Report of the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation Limited, Shillong, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 253/98]
- (f) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Nathpa Jhakri Power Corporation Limited, Shimla, for the year 1996-97.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Nathpa Jhakri Power Corporation Limited, Shimla for the year 1996-97 alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
- (2) Six statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (i) above.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 254/98]
- (3) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the National Thermal Power Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Power for the year 1997-98.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 255/98]
- (4) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Power for the year 1997-98.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 256/98]
- (5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Power Research Institute, Bangalore, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Central Power Research Institute, Bangalore, for the year 1996-97.
- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 257/98]
- (7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Power Training Institute, Faridabad, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Power Training Institute, Faridabad, for the year 1996-97.
- (8) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (7) above.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 258/98]
- (9) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Energy Management Centre, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97 alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Energy Management Centre, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97.
- (10) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (9) above.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 259/98]
- (11) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Power Finance Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Power for the year 1998-99.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 260/98]

Annual Report and Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Shipyard Ltd. etc.

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) to section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956 :
 - (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Visakhapatnam, for the year 1996-97.
 - (ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Shipyard Limited, Visakhapatnam, for the year 1996-97 alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of 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 261/98]
- (3) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Hindustan Shipyard Limited and the Ministry of Surface Transport for the year 1998-99.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 262/98]
- (4) A copy of the Notification No. G.S.R. 84(E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 23rd February, 1998, making certain amendments in the Notification No. G.S.R. 978, dated the 28th May, 1963, issued under section 620A of the Companies Act, 1956.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 263/98]
- (5) A copy of the Twenty-Sixty Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) pertaining to the Execution of provisions of the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practice Act, 1969 for the period from the 1st January, 1996 to the 31st December, 1996.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 264/98]

[Translation]

Annual Report and Review by the Government of the working of the National Museum Institute of History of Art and National Book Trust etc.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (KUMARI UMA BHARATI) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation

and Museology, New Delhi, for the year 1994-95 alongwith Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation and Museology, New Delhi, for the year 1994-95.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 265/98]
- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation and Museology, New Delhi, for the year 1995-96 alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Museum Institute of History of Art, Conservation and Museology, New Delhi, for the year 1995-96.
- (4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 266/98]
- (5) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, for the year 1995-96, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad, for the year 1995-96.
- (6) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (5) above.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 267/98]
- (7) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Book Trust, India, New Delhi, for the year 1996-97 alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) Statement (Hindi and English versions) regarding Review by the Government of the working of the National Book Trust, India, New Delhi for the year 1996-97.
- (8) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (7) above.
[Placed in Library, See No. LT 268/98]
- (9) A copy of the Auroville Foundation Rules, 1997 (Hindi and English versions) published

In Notification No. G.S.R. 385 in Gazette of India dated the 10th November, 1997 under section 33 of the Auroville Foundation Act, 1988.

- (10) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (9) above

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 269/98]

[English]

The National Environment Appellate Authority (Salary, Allowances and Condition of Service of Members) Rule, 1998 etc.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table :

- (1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (3) of section 22 of the National Environment Appellate Authority Act, 1997 :
- (i) The National Environment Appellate Authority (Salary, Allowances and Conditions of Services of Members) Rules, 1998 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 189 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 20th April, 1998.
- (ii) The National Environment Appellate Authority (Salary, Allowances and Conditions of Service of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson) Rules, 1998 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 190 (E) published in Gazette of India dated the 20th April, 1998.
- (iii) The National Environment Appellate Authority (Appeal) Rules, 1997 published in Notification No. S.O. 775(E) in Gazette of India dated the 20th November, 1997.
- (iv) The National Environment Appellate Authority (Financial and Administrative Powers) Rules 1998 published in Notification No. S.O. 224(E) in Gazette of India dated the 18th March, 1998.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 270/98]

Annual Report and Review by the Government of the working of the Shipping Corporation of India Ltd.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN) : Sir, 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 619A of the Companies Act, 1956 :

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Shipping Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 1996-97.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Shipping Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 1996-97, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon together with Annexure.
- (2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.
- (3) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Shipping Corporation of India Limited and the Ministry of Surface Transport for the year 1998-99.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 272/98]

12.04 hrs.

ANNOUNCEMENT RE : SITTING OF THE HOUSE

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, I would like to inform the House that the House would adjourn at 4 p.m. today, to reassemble at 5 p.m. for the presentation of the General Budget.

12.05 hrs.

[English]

ELECTIONS TO COMMITTEES

(I) National Shipping Board

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. M. THAMBI DURAI) : I beg to move :

"That in pursuance of Section 4(2) (a) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 read with Rule 4(2) of the National Shipping Board Rules, 1960, the Members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, four Members from among themselves, to serve as members of the National Shipping

Board, for a period up to 10.4.1999, subject to other provisions of the said Act."

MR SPEAKER : The Question is :

"That in pursuance of Section 4(2) (a) of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958 read with Rule 4(2) of the National Shipping Board Rules, 1960, the Members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, four Members from among themselves, to serve as members of the National Shipping Board, for a period up to 10.4.1999, subject to other provisions of the said Act."

The motion was adopted.

(ii) Animal Welfare Board of India

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU) : I beg to move :

"That in pursuance of Section 5(1) (i) of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, the Members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, four Members from among themselves to serve as members of the Animal Welfare Board of India, subject to the other provisions of the said Act."

MR. SPEAKER : The Question is :

"That in pursuance of Section 5(1) (i) of the Prevention of Cruelty of Animals Act, 1960, the Members of this House do proceed to elect, in such manner as the Speaker may direct, four Members from among themselves to serve as members of the Animal Welfare Board of India, subject to the other provisions of the said Act."

The motion was adopted.

12.06 hrs.

MOTION RE: FIRST REPORT OF BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA) : Sir, I beg to move :

"That this House do agree with First Report of the Business Advisory Committee presented to the House on the 29th May, 1998."

MR SPEAKER : The Question is :

"That this House do agree with First Report of the Business Advisory Committee

presented to the House on the 29th May, 1998."

The motion was adopted

12.07 hrs.

PRASAR BHARATI (BROADCASTING CORPORATION OF INDIA) AMENDMENT BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990.

Sir, with your kind permission, I would also bring to the notice of the House that Clause 11 of the Bill, which involves expenditure, should have been printed in thick type but inadvertently it has not been printed so.

MR SPEAKER : The Question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to amend the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990."

The motion was adopted

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ : I introduce the Bill.

12.08 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

- (i) Need to provide adequate compensation to the opium growers of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan for the damage caused to their crops due to hailstorms and take steps for renewal of their licences

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Opium growers of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan contributing to the National economy by earning foreign exchange for the exchequer of the country, have been badly hit and have incurred unexpected loss due to hailstorms and the incidence of crops disease. Mandsaur is the worst hit district of Madhya Pradesh. The opium growers are faced with the worst financial crisis on one side while on the other side it would not be possible for them to get their

* Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part, II, Section-2, dated 1.6.98

licences renewed due to the departmental rule. As such, the opium growers need to be provided suitable relief. Their licences should also be renewed. The losses were to be assessed after making physical inspection of the crops, however, that too was not done.

This matter not only relates to the interests of the thousands of farmers, it also relates to foreign exchange earnings. I, therefore, request Hon. Finance Minister to issue immediately suitable instructions to the deptt. to compensate the farmers in this regard.

(ii) Need to open six computer reservation counters at Meerut City Railway Station, UP

SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH (Meerut) : Mr Speaker, Sir. Only three computerised reservation centres are functioning at present at Meerut City railway station. Meerut is a big trade and industrial centre and has a big cantonment area. In the absence of an Enquiry office at the Railway station people have to wait for hours together in hope of getting a confirmed ticket only to be told that no reservation was available in so and so train. As such people, particularly the army personnel have to face a lot of difficulties. About 1500 reservation are made at this station daily.

I, therefore, request hon. Minister of Railways to grant permission to open three more computerised reservation counters in addition to the existing three; for VIP's women and disabled persons and general public and an enquiry office should also be opened. It should be ensured that they start functioning as early as possible.

(iii) Need to provide adequate funds to State Government of Madhya Pradesh for providing relief to the people whose crops have been affected by heavy rains and hailstorms in all districts of the State including Bilaspur.

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE : (Bilaspur) Mr. Speaker, Sir. Kharif and Rabi crops of farmers have been completely destroyed due to heavy rains and hailstorms in all districts of Madhya Pradesh including district Bilaspur during the period from November 1997 to January-February 1998. The State Government has already conducted survey in this regard but so far no assistance has been given to the farmers and labourers. There is an urgent need to take up relief work and provide compensation amount to the farmers for the loss of their crops.

Hence, I request the Union Government to sanction assistance of Rs. 100 crores to Madhya Pradesh for providing compensation and taking relief measures to help the affected farmers.

(iv) Need to set up Central Schools in Bilaspur and Una districts of Himachal Pradesh

SHRI SURESH CHANDEL (Hamirpur) (H.P.) : Mr Speaker, Sir, Defence Personnel, Ex-servicemen and employees working under Central Government live in large number in my parliamentary constituency Hamirpur, Bilaspur and Una districts of Himachal Pradesh but no Central Schools had been set up in these two districts so far because of which employees are facing great difficulties in the matter of education of their wards.

Himachal Pradesh is a border, hilly and backward state. Therefore, I request that one Central School should be opened at district headquarters Bilaspur and also at Una District headquarter on priority basis by making provision for adequate funds for this purpose in the financial budget, 1998-99, so as to make adequate arrangements for the education of children of Defence Personnel and Central Government employees living in these districts.

(v) Need to take adequate safety measures by detailing Expert team to monitor the fallout of nuclear blasts and to give special financial package to people of Pokharan of Jaisalmer district

[English]

COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY (Barmer) : Sir, five nuclear tests have been carried out on 11th & 13th May, 1998 in Defence Field Ranges of Pokharan. I congratulate the scientists and engineers from Corps. of Engineers of Army and Defence Personnel who have contributed for success of these tests.

I have visited the adjoining villages which were affected due to nuclear tests. I met the villagers of Khetolai, Chacha and Dhollyan. I have gone through the damages caused to their houses, reservoirs, cattle and the public in general. A number of Pucca houses have been badly damaged. The assessment was carried out by non-technical persons. The compensation offered is negligible and most inadequate.

There are some underground reservoirs to store water which have developed cracks and have been damaged beyond repairs. The private land owners of the area are not permitted to go to their fields adjoining Field Fire Ranges. The local people are very apprehensive and fearful about the fallout of nuclear blasts. Some of the people are complaining about eye burning and reduction in cow milk.

I request the Government of India to take the following action to alleviate their problems :

- (a) Adequate safety measures should be taken by detailing expert teams to monitor the fallout of nuclear blasts.

The hon. Prime Minister is not here. I have been there. But I went with him also.

MR. SPEAKER : Please read whatever is there in the text only.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : No, this will not go on record. Please understand the procedure. This is a matter under Rule 377.

*(Interruptions)**

COL. SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : (b) The hon. Prime Minister should give special financial package to the people of Pokharan of Jaisalmer district for construction of civil and veterinary hospitals and water supply channel from Indira Gandhi Canal to Pokharan region.

(vi) Need to redress the grievances of Extra Departmental Agents who participated in the strike during 23—29 October, 1996

SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR (Ottapalam) : Nearly three lakhs of extra departmental employees are working in the Postal Department. Most of them had participated in the strike of the period from 23rd October, 1996 to 29th October, 1996 demanding the removal of the eligibility ceiling on bonus to Central Government employees. The Central Cabinet has taken a positive decision on their demand and the demand was conceded. Further, the Central Cabinet again took a decision to make payment of the wages for the strike period by granting eligible leave to participants. The ED agents are not entitled for any kind of leave. If leave is granted to them the allowance for the leave period will be deducted from their monthly wages and paid to the substitutes. Even though, the Government of India has decided to condone the strike period but the benefit of the decision has not been implemented to the poor paid ED agents only on the plea that they are not entitled to wages during the leave period.

The decision of the Postal authorities is in contravention to the spirit of the Cabinet decision. So the postal workers of Kerala went on an agitational programme from 2.12 1996. The then Hon. Minister for Communications intervened on the issue and promised the Union (NFPE) representative that action would be taken for payment of strike period of wages to ED agents also. But it seems no improvement on this issue is there.

I request the Government to look into it.

(vii) Need to set up Power House for uninterrupted supply of Power at Mashrakh or Baniapur in Maharajganj Parliamentary Constituency in Bihar

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj) : The Saran division located in the Maharajganj constituency

in Bihar gets very little power supply. Maharajganj Parliamentary Constituency is located between Saran and Siwan district under Saran Division and the three district headquarters of their division have power houses but Maharajganj has to depend on neighbouring district headquarters for the supply of power as it is not a district headquarter. As a result, the condition of power supply is very poor in this parliamentary constituency having population of 20 lakh. Power is supplied only for 4-5 hours in this whole constituency and that too in instalments. Due to this, not only the people of this area have to face inconveniences but financial condition of the residents engaged in agriculture is also affected because the local villagers have to face several problems like irrigation of fields in the absence of power supply.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to set up a power sub-station at Mashrakh or Baniapur as they are located at the central point of this constituency so that normal power supply could be made available for Maharajganj region and the people of this area get a relief from the present situation of power crisis.

(viii) Need to Waive the Outstanding Interest of Rs. 663 crore of the S.C.C.L. to strengthen its financial position

[English]

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam) : The Government of India has been requested to waive the outstanding interest of Rs. 663 crore of the S.C.C.L. accrued during the 8th Plan, for which a moratorium was granted by the Government of India, payable in the 9th Plan. This is necessary to restore the financial health of the Company and to sustain its growth profile to meet the demand for coal in Southern India to a large extent.

Therefore, I request through you, to waive the outstanding interest of Rs. 663 crore accrued during the 8th Plan in order to strengthen the financial position of the S.C.C.L.

(ix) Need to clear the Proposal of the State Government of Maharashtra for providing Civic Amenities to the Hutment Dwellers on the Lands of the Airport Authority of India, Mumbai, Maharashtra

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : There are around 65,000 hutments on the land belonging to the Airport Authority of India in Mumbai for many years. Since they have not been provided with civic amenities such as light, lavatories, water, cement passages etc., life of the hutment dwellers has become very miserable.

This matter was discussed with the concerned authorities on a number of occasions but it has not been resolved so far. The Government of Maharashtra is willing to include them in the housing scheme which

has been introduced in the city of Mumbai. The Union Government should take the initiative and finalise the housing scheme with the State of Maharashtra or alternatively no objection certificate for providing civic amenities to the hutment dwellers may be granted at the earliest.

(x) Need to Open a Central School in Kollam district in Kerala

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : Sir, Iollam town, the Headquarters of Kollam District in Kerala is a thickly populated industrial area. There are many public sector industries owned by the Government of India and there are many Central Government Offices in the locality. The inadequacy of sufficient educational institution is a set back in the field of education of this district. While the other districts are having the Central School facility, the Kollam District has not got this facility.

Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to consider the opening of a Central School in Kollam District.

(xi) Need to announce support price of Coconut at Rs. 5000/- per quintal and to instruct Government Agencies to procure Copra from farmers

SHRI P. SANKARAN (Calicut) : Sir, my name is in the list. *(Interruptions)*.

MR. SPEAKER : You may please speak now.

SHRI P. SANKARAN : I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the problems of thousands of coconut growers of Kerala. Coconut cultivation is the backbone of the economy of Kerala. Any reduction in the price of coconut will adversely affect the people of Kerala.

I am sorry to say that the market price of coconut has come down to Rs. 2,555/- per quintal. The support price that the Central Government used to announce every year has not been announced so far. The support price may be fixed immediately to at least Rs. 5,000/- per quintal. The NAFED and other Government agencies may be entrusted to procure copra, otherwise it will cause irreparable loss and hardship to the farmers of Kerala.

12.23 hrs.

[English]

MR SPEAKER : Hon. Members, there are 24 Members listed for the Zero Hour.

(Interruptions)

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri) : Sir, I may be permitted to raise a very important matter. ...*(Interruptions)*.

MR SPEAKER : I have to call all the names. Please take your seat. I will give chance to you. There are 24 names listed for the Zero Hour. Would I request all the Hon. Members to take only two minutes each so that I can accommodate all the Members. Now, Shri T. Govindan.

SHRI T. GOVINDAN (Kasargod) : I would like to draw the kind attention of the Union Government and the hon. Minister of Commerce towards the fall in price of rubber and copra in Kerala as a result of the Exim Policy declared by the Government recently. The Government of Kerala has submitted so many proposals before the Government of India. The Members of Parliament from Kerala staged a *dharna* on the 20th morning which I hope the hon. Minister of Commerce might have noticed. The memorandums submitted to the hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Minister of Commerce are very clear and self-explanatory. Now, the rubber and coconut growers are put in the similar position like the cotton growers of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. The Government is not taking any decision to come to the rescue of the rubber growers. So, I would request the Government to take some measures to save the rubber and coconut growers.

Hence, I demand that there should be a ban on the import of used tyres and natural rubber. The Government should restrict the import of polyurethane to protect the latex and natural foam rubber industries. The Government should limit the import of natural rubber and it should ensure remunerative prices for the rubber products.

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (Nagpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the House towards the fact that Vidarbha region is being subjected to constant neglect. The people of that area are now expressing their resentment over this injustice and have made a demand for the formation of separate state of Vidarbha which is now before the Parliament. I can cite several examples of this apathy. In every fields of development—be it the irrigation or electricity, Vidarbha has been neglected. Electricity is generated in Vidarbha region, still the people of that area are forced to live in darkness. The matter that I am going to raise in the House to seek justice, is also associated with Vidarbha. In 1981, the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Antulay had chalked out 33 point formula for the development of Maharashtra and especially for the development of Vidarbha. One of the point included therein was the decision to set up Indian Institute of Medical Sciences at Nagpur. Thereafter the proposal was supported by the succeeding chief Ministers and the Leader of Opposition, Shri Sharad Pawar has always supported the decision to set up such an institute at Nagpur. However the present Government has chosen to ignore this decision and now a decision has been taken to set up the Institute at Nasik. "Bhoomipujan" is to be held on 10th. I would

like to bring it to the notice of the House that all the required facilities are available at Nagpur and Nagpur is located at a central point of the country. It is the most appropriate site from transport and academic point of view. The people have launched an agitation over this demand and also to oppose the present decision of the Government. Hence, through you, I would like to make a request to the Government to help us in giving justice to the people of Vidarbha, especially the people of Nagpur. I also urge upon the Prime Minister to help us in withholding the implementation of the decision taken by the Government of Maharashtra abruptly to set up this Institute at Nasik. We also expect you to prevent such an injustice meted out to Vidarbha.

[English]

SHRI V. SATHIAMOORTHY (Ramanathapuram) : Mr. Speaker in Tamil Nadu thousands of fishermen used to go deep sea by mechanised boats in Rameshwaram, Thondi, Keelakarai, Erwadi, Vaalinokkam and Mookaiyur coastal area and fishing export variety of fish only. For the past fifteen days, the exporters in fishing market refused to give usual and reasonable price as already offered. It is unfortunate that the exporters are explaining that international market has gone down due to the nuclear tests in India. It is not true. All the exporters in these areas by joining together are trying to exploit the fishing community. The fishermen are not ready to fish because the expenditure incurred is too high compared to the price offered. Thousands of fishing families are suffering a lot due to the extraordinary situation. Our Government may take immediate steps to fetch reasonable price from the exporters and thus save the starving poor fishermen community in Tamil Nadu.

SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH (Inner Manipur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to draw your attention to the mass atrocities and rigging in the Panchayat elections in West Bengal. It has been reported that about 65 persons have been killed in the pre and post Panchayat elections in West Bengal. The dead include candidate and women also.

The Panchayat elections involve participation of political and social workers at the grassroots level. The massive rigging and capturing of booths along with violence of this magnitude is not a healthy sign for democracy.

The CPI(M) cadre has been engaged in terrorising the workers of the Trinamul Congress and BJP before and after the Panchayat elections. The atrocities are more pronounced on Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, OBCs and minorities. Many houses been burnt down making thousands of workers of Trinamul Congress and BJP supporters homeless. There are reported cases of rape and extortion also. ...*(Interruptions)*

The victims affected by the post-election violence have migrated to Calcutta as they feel insecure in their own homes, villages and towns. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Chaoba Singh, you should not read, but you can make your points. During the Zero Hour, you should not read from any papers.

SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH : Sir, I have given my notice under Rule 377.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly) : Sir, he is making baseless allegations.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Chaoba Singh, you can mention your point, but you should not read. Please conclude now.

SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH : The smooth conduct of Panchayat elections is the sole responsibility of the State Government.

MR. SPEAKER : Please conclude now.

SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH : In case of West Bengal, not only the State Government has failed in maintaining the law and order during the elections. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : That will not go on record. Shri Ahamed to speak now.

*(Interruptions)**

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, whatever he has stated should be removed from the records.

SHRI E. AHAMED : Sir, I would like to raise a matter of urgent public importance, which I have raised in this House in the Eleventh Lok Sabha also.

I would like to know about the Government's policy regarding those prisoners who are still languishing under the TADA. Though TADA has been allowed to be lapsed, thousands of prisoners are still languishing in the jails. The Government should either review their cases and if they are found guilty, they should be convicted, or they should be released. Ours is a democratic State and we are proud of the fact that we are having this democratic process. But in the matter of TADA prisoners, whichever Government comes into power, they are really passive and lethargic.

Sir, human rights should be given priority and we should respect them. It is almost like saying 'Long live the King' after the King is dead. TADA has been allowed to be lapsed, but the prisoners are still languishing in the jails.

I would like to know about the policy of this Government on this matter, whether their cases would be reviewed immediately from the point of human rights and whether natural justice would be done to them. This is the only issue that I would like to raise here. These TADA prisoners are languishing in the jails. Right from the *coolie* to the cine-star have been arrested under TADA, and whoever was in a position to get out of it has already gone. But the poor people and those who are not even connected with it, including the minors, are still languishing in the jails.

*Not Recorded

[Shri E. Ahamed]

Therefore, I would like to urge upon the Government to consider this matter sympathetically.

I wish to raise one more matter of propriety.

MR. SPEAKER : There are a number of other Members and please allow them to speak.

SHRI SUDHIR GIRI (Contal) : I have an important matter to raise in this House. As far as I am aware, every recognised language in India could be the medium of examination on All-India basis. But in practice, English comes to occupy such a position that it becomes the sole language determining the fate of examinees. Though officially it is on record that every recognised language may be used to answer the questions, the candidates appearing in the State examinations have expressed their grievances that the examiners prefer English to any other language. If the candidates cannot answer the questions in English either in the written test or *viva voce*, they are not selected. These experiences are intimated to the candidates through mutual talks. Then, the candidates who intend to use their mother-tongue get unnerved and try their level best to get themselves equipped in English, which proves to be, in fact, fatal.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Government to take steps to give impetus to the examinees to use their mother-tongue as medium for achieving success in the All-India competitive examinations. The group of people who are engaged as examiners should also be instructed properly so that they do not attach so much importance to English for succeeding in the All-India competitive examinations.

Mother tongue may be propagated as the proper language for succeeding in the competitive examinations.

SHRI NADENDLA BHASKARA RAO (Khamman) : Sir, I would like to bring to your kind attention a matter of public interest and national importance which has arisen due to total strike in Singareni collieries in Kottagudem and surrounding areas situated in Khamman, Andhra Pradesh. More than two lakh workers working in Kottagudem and areas around Kottagudem coal mines are on total strike since 25th May, 1998.

The main demands of the coal workers, besides the small ones, are employment to their children on disability of the worker, and interim relief based on Wage Board recommendations. These recommendations were, in fact, discussed before the State Government. The State Government called a meeting, but they failed to come to an understanding on the plea that these matters related to the Central Government and that they have nothing to do with them, though a huge number of workers are on strike.

There is loss of production of coal and consequently, the supply channels to the thermal units have been

completely shut and there is every danger that the thermal units in the States may have to be shut down on account of shortage of coal.

I would urge that the Central Government should immediately intervene and settle the issue.

Thank you very much.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY (Ranchi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention towards H.E.C. situated in my constituency. This industry is known as the mother industry because lakhs of families depend on it for their livelihood. However, unfortunately, retired personnel were inducted against the vacant posts of Chairman and Director, who held the post for a year or two and did not pay any attention towards the condition of the factory, due to which its condition kept on deteriorating. This factory did not get any work order from the Central Government establishments. Underhand methods are employed to give work orders to the private parties and that is why the condition of the Central Government establishment is also worsening. The attention of the previous Government was drawn towards this deteriorating condition and this time too, we have requested the concerned Minister and the Prime Minister to issue directions to the concerned officials of the establishment to advertise the vacancies of Director and Chairman in order to recruit suitable persons on these posts so that more work orders may pour in under their able guidance. Instructions to this effect should be issued by the Government. Recently Coal India floated a tender involving a work order worth Rs. 500 crore. Only H.E.C. has submitted its tender so far. The World Bank, on the other hand, wants that the contract be awarded to foreign companies. It is very unfortunate. The factories may survive only if the Government work orders are given to public sector establishments. ...*(Interruptions)* This factory has been allotted a large area and now H.E.C. proposes to sell the land. The displaced persons have not been provided employment and their dependent families are not getting power or water. Such a situation has arisen there. Thus, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Central Government towards these problems so as to find a solution.

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA (Udhampur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I hail from Udhampur. It is an area rocked by terrorism. The election results were announced on 17th of the last month and on 18th, 26 people were massacred there. Within the very next week, ten more people were killed at Desa. Due to these incidents, approximately 10,000 families have fled the area leaving behind their homes and hearths and are now camping at different places. Some of them are at Riyasi and some are living in Kampal and other villages. The present Home Minister is the first Home Minister to have undertaken an on-the-spot visit to take stock of the situation. At that time, he had ordered that so long as

these people do not return to their homes, it will be the responsibility of the Government to provide them ration and shelter. However, despite the orders of Home Minister, the State Government did not pay any attention towards these refugees. At present, ten thousand families are leading a miserable life. Nobody is getting any ration. Their houses have been looted. I request the Government to immediately ask the Jammu and Kashmir Government to provide ration to these displaced people and make arrangements for their stay until they return to their homes. We also want that they should go back to their homes. It is my request that the Government may discharge its responsibility by providing them food and shelter.

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA (Patiala) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, keeping in view the sentiments of the Sikh community, the Delhi High Court and Delhi Government have exempted Sikh women from wearing a helmet while riding the two wheeler either as a driver or pillion-rider. It is regrettable that Delhi Police is still harassing them and is not implementing the decision taken in this regard. I would request the Hon'ble Home Minister to implement this decision so that such harassment is stopped. This law is already being implemented in other countries such as U.S.A. and Canada, however, it is a matter of regret that it is not being implemented in Delhi. There is widespread resentment among the Sikh community over this issue. Yesterday, a delegation of Delhi Gurudwara Prabandhak committee and Shiromani Gurudwara Prabandhak committee, Amritsar met me. I request that this decision may be implemented without further delay.

SHRI DHIRENDRA AGARWAL (Chatra) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention towards the Palamu Field Firing range being set up in my constituency. Ever since people have come to know about the plans to set up a field firing range in this area, an atmosphere of terror has been created in the minds of the people over this issue. The residents of the area are finding it difficult to get their sons and daughters married. All developmental activities have come to a standstill. The bungling has increased in case of the few on going projects. If this field firing range is set up in my constituency, approximately six lakh people will be displaced and land worth thousands of crores of rupees will become barren. I agree that the jawans of the army should be properly trained but I am not in favour of making progress which may lead to destruction. I request you to set up field firing range in such an area where a large scale displacement of population may be avoided or a very little number of people are affected. I would also make a request to the Defence Minister that my constituency is predominantly inhabited by scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people. The decision taken by the predecessor Government to set up a field firing range in my area is not in public interest. Hence the implementation of this decision may be withheld so that the poor and the backward people are not exploited and residents are not displaced.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly) : Sir, the Government of India had taken a major step in 1987 to protect the Jute Industry through a very important piece of legislation called the Jute Packaging Materials (Compulsory Use in Packing Commodities) Act 1987. This Jute Packaging Materials Act has been more violated than honoured and implemented particularly by the Cement Industry. Ultimately, some interested groups had gone to the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court had upheld the Government of India Act. In 1995, according to the directions given by the Supreme Court, an Advisory Committee was set up, which decided in 1995 that the cement industry would use at least 50 per cent from the jute packaging material, the fertilizer industry also would use 50 per cent and the foodgrains and sugar industry must use 100 per cent of jute packaging material. But we find that the Cement industry has grossly violated this order and now we are told that a very major dilution is going to take place. It is in the process. Today a delegation led by two Ministers from the West Bengal Government Shri Shanti Ghatak, Labour Minister and Md. Amin, the Minister-in-charge of Minorities Interests etc., met the P.M. and tried to impress on him about the violations of the Central Act. Several provisions of the Act continue to be violated by the industries, particularly by the Cement industry as also the Sugar industry.

The Government should ensure that several provisions of this Act are strictly enforced, thus protecting this industry. This is one of the largest industries in the organised sector in Eastern India employing more than 2.50 lakhs of workmen. There are more than five lakhs of jute cultivating families who are dependent on this industry. Jute has a future and it has a growing market. It is the natural fibre. This industry could not flourish because of some negative factors.

I urge upon the Government to see that there is no further dilution of the 1995 Order regarding the fifty per cent use by Cement and fertilizer industries and 100 per cent use by the foodgrains and sugar industry. Further dilution is going to be decided under pressure of the cement lobby and others.

I urge upon the Government to see that this is checked so that it fulfils its responsibility of protecting this very important jute industry.

DR. ASIM BALA (Nabadwip) : This is a very serious matter. I want the Minister to take it up seriously.

[Translation]

SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH (Meerut) : Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise a matter of national importance with your permission.

Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, terrorism is being unleashed in Kashmir by Pakistan through foreign mercenaries. After conducting the nuclear tests, Pakistan has intensified its efforts to internationalise this issue.

[Shri Amar Pal Singh]

Sir, through you and through this House, I would like to request that so long as Pakistan does not stop instigating terrorist activities in Kashmir, the Government of India should not hold any talks with Pakistan. This is a matter concerning pride of our nation.

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA (Padrauna) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have also given a motion regarding a very important issue. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I am calling out the names as per the list.

SHRIMATI BHAVNA KARDAM DAVE (Surendra Nagar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the consumption, storage or otherwise use of ordinary salt has been legally banned with effect from May 28, 1998 a fine of Rs. 1000 or an imprisonment of six months has been announced for those violating the law. I would like to submit in the House that if we turn to history, we will see that when the British Government imposed the tax on salt, the father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi had started salt satyagraha. Hence I make a humble submission that this law should be reviewed because iodized salt is not required by the people throughout the country. A slight deficiency of iodine is detected only in the people living in the hilly area such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Assam etc. Symptoms of disease of goitre due to deficiency of iodine has been detected in only three lakh people. It is indeed essential to pay attention towards it to check this disease but it is not right to impose a law on hundred crore people of the country due to these three lakh people.

I would like to say to Hon'ble Minister that it has been mentioned in the bulletin of UNICEF that iodine evaporates in the air and the process speeds up if it is kept in open. If the iodised salt is tested in a laboratory, we will get different reports and this will give rise to corruption. Hence, through you, I would like to say that the ordinary salt costs only fifty paise per kg., whereas the iodized salt will be available at Rs. 5-7 per kg. Is this not injustice to the poor and the common man? I would also like to point out that potassium iodine required for iodization has to be imported from abroad. 70 per cent of the salt is produced in my state, Gujarat. This law has widespread impact there. I would like to make an humble appeal in this House to Hon'ble Minister to pay attention in this regard and review the law. This is my request.

SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' (Almora) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, several acres of agricultural land has been eroded and crops of fruits and vegetables have been destroyed due to heavy rains and hailstorms in Uttaranchal and especially in four districts of my constituency, Almora, Champaran, Pithoragarh and Bageshwar in Uttar Pradesh on 7.5.1998. The farmers have lost their crops and a loss of more than twenty crore rupees has been incurred as the metalled road

and the bridge have been destroyed. Through you, I would like to submit to the Union Government that the contribution provided by the State Government in form of immediate assistance is very low, hence the Central Government should release at least twenty crore rupees as special assistance in order to compensate for the loss suffered due to heavy rains and hailstorm on 7.5.1998 so that relief may be provided to the common man and the road and the bridge washed away due to rains may be reconstructed.

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur) : Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit that an agitation has been going on for quite a long time for setting up a new railway zone at Bilaspur Headquarters. A loss of crores of rupees has been incurred since 15.1.1996 when the agitation turned violent. After months of relay hunger strike, discontinuance of coal loading, closure of division, the workers of Chhatra Yuva Jana Sangharsh Samiti are sitting on a fast unto death at Jantar-Mantar in Delhi since 30th May. Their condition is critical.

On 30th January 1996, the then leader of opposition in the 11th Lok Sabha and the present Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had made a demand for setting up a Railway zone at Bilaspur Division which has been one of the highest profit earning division for the Railways.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to ask the Union Government to make an announcement regarding setting up a Railway zone at Bilaspur Headquarters without further delay so that Chhatra Yuva Jana Sangharsh Samiti may end its agitation.

SHRI GAURI SHANKER CHATURBHUI BISEN (Balaghat) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Madhya Pradesh is in the grip of severe drought this year. All the District Collectors have sent the relevant data to the State Government. The Kharif as well as Rabi crops have been destroyed. The yield has been only 50 per cent in 1251 out to 1252 villages under my constituency District Balaghat. The State Government is not providing any relief. The Congress Government has not put its case properly before the Union Government and the matter has not been discussed with the MPs either.

Madhya Pradesh is not getting any relief as it failed to present its case effectively. People are dying of starvation. No relief works have started. Only for Balaghat district Rs. 50 lakh have been granted. There are 4 lakh labourers in Balaghat. So this amount will not suffice to provide work even to 10% of the labourers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I request the Union Agriculture Minister through you to invite the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh and arrange a special sitting of all MPs of Madhya Pradesh so that some effective steps would be taken to tackle this grave situation prevailing in the State.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, this matter does not concern only to my constituency but Madhya Pradesh as a whole.

40 districts of Madhya Pradesh have been affected due to drought. People are not getting drinking water there. They are dying there. Farmers have no seeds for sowing. Government have not compensated them under R.B.C. 6 (4). There is no arrangement for fodder for cattle. My request is that the Agriculture Minister should constitute an enquiry committee comprising MPs and other officials who should visit the drought affected areas to find a solution to this problem. Sir, if this is not done, then let me say that during the coming monsoon, there will be no agricultural operation in that region. There is no arrangement for seeds there. I request the Central Government to give directions to State Government to provide all possible help to the farmers.

SHRI RAM NARAIN MEENA (Kota) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw your attention towards the burning problems of farmers. Work is being done on the fields of farmers under the Central Government's sponsored schemes or the programmes which are run in the State by the assistance of the Central Government but the farmers are not paid any compensation for it. I would like to request the Central Government through you that the money should be allocated to State Governments by the Central Government with a compulsion that the farmers whose land is used for any purpose will be paid compensation first. Only after giving compensation, the land of the farmers should be used.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, work is being done in Rajasthan under the Irrigated Area Development Scheme. Drains are being dug on the farmer's land under different schemes whether it is the Chambal Project or Kota Project. Canals have been dug up but no compensation has been given to the farmers for their land. Pay orders which were issued in 1996 have not been honoured till date. There is no provision for their payment in the budget. Money received from the Central Government is used for other purposes.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the compensation given to the farmers for their land is very nominal. The rate of compensation is far below the rate prevailing in the market. The compensation is not paid for the full acquired land and the pay orders issued are not honoured. I would like to cite the example of one Kalu S/c Deva of village Motipura, district Bundi whose land was acquired under Irrigated Area Development Scheme but compensation has not been paid till date. Similarly, the left side of the land of Nandu Berva has been acquired and Main Kota canal has been constructed over it. Pay order Number 119 dated 1.3.96 was issued to this person belonging to scheduled caste community by Tehsildar, Land Housing, Kota but the pay order was not honoured. Two years have been passed since 1996 but the payments against the pay orders have not been realised yet.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I request that the State Government should be instructed by the Central Government to provide immediate compensation to the

farmers whose land has been acquired. I request the Central Government to issue instructions to Rajasthan Government so that the poor farmers could be compensated for their acquired lands.

[English]

SHRI KONIJETI ROSAIAH (Narasaraopet) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I would like to raise a very important issue concerning the State of Andhra Pradesh. Ignoring the solemn assurance given to the Supreme Court of India, the Government of Karnataka is going ahead with the construction of Almati dam over the above the height permitted by the Government of India. This will terribly affect the interests of the State of Andhra Pradesh.

This is the life and death issue for the agricultural community of the entire State of Andhra Pradesh. You are also aware of the dispute. During the previous Government's tenure, the Government of Karnataka was getting some patronage and support. At least in the changed scenario, I hope and urge upon this Government to immediately intervene and stop the unauthorised construction. Or else it will become a major inter-State dispute and it may lead to a lot of problems. So, I appeal to the Prime Minister and the Government of India to take immediate steps to resolve this issue of unauthorised construction.

[Translation]

SHRI FAGGAN SINGH KULESTE (Mandala) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Tribal Finance Development Corporation has been set up in Madhya Pradesh which has formulated many schemes for the development of tribals. But during the recent times, from 1996 till date no such scheme has been taken up to benefit the Adivasis. I would like to give an example of Shri Ashok Kumar, a resident of Raipur who was allotted a bus few days back but the permit for the same has not yet been issued. Similarly, 6% interest was to be charged on the loan taken by the Adivasis for purchasing a bus, but Madhya Pradesh Government and the T.F.D. Corporation is charging 12 to 14% interest for the same. Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a very serious offence. On behalf of the Government, Finance Development Corporation was to provide Tata Company's Motor vehicles to Adivasis. But instead of this brand, Swaraj Mazda Company's vehicles were given. A number of such instances have come to our notice involving an amount of Rs. 15 crores. I want your protection and with your permission I demand that stringent action should be taken by the Central Government in such cases.

I would also like to say that Adivasis were deprived of the facilities and amenities which should have been made available to them. Ashok Kumar has to commit suicide in front of commissionerate because he was not given permit for the bus. It is a very serious crime. Chairman of Finance Development Corporation has blamed the M.D. of the Corporation and the Minister

[Shri Faggan Singh Kuleste]

concerned saying that instead of Advasis, some influential persons were given the benefits from the allocation made for development of Advasis.

I would like to request the Government through you to ponder over this matter seriously as this matter concerns the Advasis of Madhya Pradesh as a whole. I also demand that Union Government should order enquiry into the matter as early as possible.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH (Satna) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a very serious matter ...*(Interruptions)* We want that a committee may be set up to inquire into this matter ...*(Interruptions)* Hon'ble Minister may please say something about it ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Would the Government like to respond?

[Translation]

SHRI GAURI SHANKER CHATURBHUI BISEN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a matter of economic offence ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

[Translation]

SHRI GAURI SHANKER CHATURBHUI BISEN : Mr. Speaker Sir, atrocities are being committed against the advasis of Madhya Pradesh ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat. Is there any response from the Government side?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH : Mr. Speaker Sir, Government should respond to it ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat. I am asking the Government to respond to it. Is there any response from the Government side? They are raising a matter regarding a specific programme with regard to the State of Madhya Pradesh. Hon. Minister, please make a note of it.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (Shajapur) : I would like to give information about it to the Hon.. Minister as he did not know about it. Madhya Pradesh Government had provided transport facility to tribals through Finance

Corporation but due to corruption rampant in the department of Transport, permits are not issued for facilitating tribals and thus transport facility provided to them is not being utilized. The vehicles purchased by tribals are lying unused for want of permits.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Minister, please make a note of it.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seats. I am asking the Government to respond to it.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I think, the subject belongs to the domain of the State Government. But even then, Since it is pertaining to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, if the facts stated by the hon. Members are correct, then it is a matter of concern—the Central Government will take it up with the State Government.

MR. SPEAKER : All right, Now, Shri Ram Nagina Mishra.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seats. Hon. Minister has already replied to it. Please take your seats.

*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER : It will not go on record. Shri Ram Nagina Mishra's speech only will go on record.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA (Padrauna) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to raise an important issue here and I thank you for allowing me to speak here.

There are nine sugar mills in Kushinagar district of Uttar Pradesh which falls in my constituency. Four textile mills are also situated here and out of these four mills two are lying closed. Sugar factories of Kathukulan and Padrauna are functioning in my constituency. Last year thousands of farmers had staged dharna and 500 of them were arrested. I was also with them. The State Government and the Ministry of Textiles under the Central Government reached an agreement for revival of Kathukulan and Padrauna mills. It was decided that 25 percent of the money collected as price of sugar would be given to the farmers but so far it has not been done.

I am surprised to know that now Textile Ministry has sent a notice that sugar factories situated at Padrauna and Kathukulan functioning under Kanpur Sugar Works Limited are not the factories of Textile

*Not Recorded

Ministry. You will be surprised to know that all these factories were managed by the Textile Ministry till these were making profit and now the Minister and officers of Textile Ministry have sent this notice. It should be inquired into. What will be the future of such institution which is not under anybody's charge.

Sir, through you I would like to say that this matter pertains to millions of farmers and for the last two years Rs. 18 crore of farmers is due ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Ram Nágina Mishra, You have given your notice only at 10.20 a.m. Even then I allowed you to raise it here because of the seriousness of the problem. Please complete it soon.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA : Please let me speak for one minute. I am just concluding.

Sir, these factories are not under anybody's charge so I request the Government to take over it or issue instructions for the State Government to take it over.

Alongwith this, I would also like to raise a matter of sugar mills of Kaptanganj and Sardarnagar. Rs. 22 crore of farmers is due on Sardarnagar sugarmill and Rs. 14 crore on Kaptanganj sugar mill. These are private sugar mills. I would request the Government to take over these sugarmills as farmers are not getting their dues. Otherwise such an arrangements should be made so that farmers could get their payment and these mills function properly.

Hon. Minister of Agriculture is present here who is well-wisher of farmers. Millions of farmers are suffering due to it and both the concerned ministers are not here. I would request you to convey my feelings to them.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now, we are going to have a discussion under Rule 193.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Ahamed, please take your seat. It is going to be a very important discussion.

(Interruptions)

SHRI E. AHAMED : Sir, as a matter of propriety, I would like to bring an important point to your notice. I would take only one minute.

Sir, the House is in Session. When the House is in Session—as the hon. Ministers are accountable to the House—they must provide all information to this House first. But it is so unfortunate that the hon. Defence Minister has given information to the newspapers through private news channel.

I would just like to say that no Minister shall be allowed to belittle the dignity of the House.

MR. SPEAKER : It has already been noted by the hon. Minister. Please take your seat, Shri Ahamed.

SHRI E. AHAMED : I would only like to bring it to your kind notice that before coming to the House, he has given many defence-related matters to the Press. It is my duty to bring it to your notice.

13.11 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Incidents of suicide committed by farmers in various parts of the country due to non-payment of remunerative prices for their agricultural produce

MR. SPEAKER : The House shall now take up discussion under Rule 193 regarding incidents of suicide committed by farmers in various parts of the country due to non-payment of remunerative prices for the agricultural produce.

Before the discussion starts, I would like to make a small observation.

Being personally aware of the plight of farmers in Andhra Pradesh, I can say that the reasons that have led the farmers all over the country to take resort to this extreme step are not far to seek. It is actually a combination of factors—natural and man-made—that has resulted in this calamitous situation. Be it the non-payment of remunerative prices in some States, the failure of crops due to inclement climatic conditions in other States or the supply of sub-standard insecticides and pesticides in some other places, or even the uncertified seeds, inadequate credit flow etc., the net result is that the poor farmer has been at the receiving end.

As the hon. Members are aware, agriculture sector today provides livelihood to about 64 per cent of the labour force, contributes nearly 33 per cent of Gross Domestic Product and accounts for about 18 per cent share of total value of the country's export. Keeping in view the importance of agriculture sector in India's economy and in view of the plight of the farming community, it has become necessary to have an in-depth look into the grievances of the farmers.

This House is about to discuss this matter now. I would urge upon the hon. Members to rise above party lines and maintain objectivity in their speeches. Apportioning blame is not going to help; constructive suggestions have to be made to overcome the problems that beset the agricultural sector.

I would also urge upon the Government to make some meaningful positive response by announcing concrete and comprehensive steps which it intends to take in this regard to ensure that such tragic incidents do not recur and to ameliorate the plight of the farmers.

Shri Vilas Muttemwar may now initiate the discussion on the subject.

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (Nagpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for allowing me to raise the serious matter relating to suicide committed by farmers, in various parts of the country, who suffered heavy loss due to natural calamities, heavy rain and are not paid remunerative price of their produce. I and my party associate ourselves with the sentiments expressed by you that this issue should be debated here above the party lines.

13.14 hrs.

(Shri P.M. Sayeed in the Chair)

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a serious problem. Today we are celebrating the golden jubilee of our independence but during this period farmers have been neglected a lot. We proclaim very proudly that farmers are the backbone of our economy but what has been done so far for strengthening their financial position. We all are responsible for it. As a result of it, more than 500 farmers have committed suicide in various States. It is a lapse on part of all the political parties and our leaders. Time is still there. Therefore, in view of the seriousness of the situation some appropriate and permanent arrangements should be made in this regard.

Hon. Prime Minister is quite serious about security of the country. Now the whole world is discussing his decision in this regard. It would have been better if he had taken appropriate measures for strengthening the financial position of farmers. The whole country would have thanked him for it. His name would have been written in history of the country. But it did not happen. I am very constrained to say that when representatives of people from West Bengal, Orissa, Maharashtra and Karnataka raised a demand here for providing compensation to farmers, the hon. Prime Minister and Minister of State for Agriculture had given an assurance in this House that Special study teams will be sent to these States to make evaluation of the losses suffered by farmers so that required assistance could be provided, but unfortunately, no initiative has been taken so far. What has been done so far is quite inadequate. State Governments have not been provided any assistance.

I am saying this with a sense of responsibility that when this matter was raised in the House earlier the figure of suicide committed by farmers was 26 and hon. Prime Minister had given an assurance that a special team would be sent to Maharashtra. The Chief Minister and the Deputy Chief Minister of the State also requested for it. On 27th of the last month it was replied that 51 farmers had committed suicide. If proper attention had have been paid at that time, 25 more farmers would

not have committed suicide. Now this figure has crossed 52. Day before yesterday also, another farmer had committed suicide. The Leader of Opposition Shri Sharad Pawar had gone there to console the family of that farmer. We have to face serious consequences because proper attention is not paid towards the serious problems. The assistance provided after the death of farmers is also not adequate and uniform in all the States and cases. The rate of compensation given after death of a person in bus accident, road accident, railway or air accident is different. A compensation upto Rs. 5 lakh is given in some cases. But the farmers, who committed suicide while protesting against this system are given only a meagre amount as compensation. Various States have sanctioned different amount for it. In Andhra Pradesh Rs. 2 lakh has been given as compensation whereas Maharashtra Government has given only one lakh and some other States have given even less amount. I would request the Government to fix specific amount for it. Nobody kills himself for sake of money. I, therefore request the Government that State Governments as well as Union Government should take initiative in such cases. This time it has not been taken. There is an able Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister in my State but they did not visit the State when suicide by farmers started. Just now hon. Mr. Speaker was saying that such issue should be considered above party politics but unfortunately Chief Minister of my State did not get any time to visit. When farmers in my State were compelled to commit suicide, the Chief Minister was celebrating his birthday like a king. Shiv Sena is in power in my State ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI UTTAMSINGH PAWAR (Jalna) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I object to it. It is not so... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Did he not celebrate his birthday? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI UTTAMSINGH PAWAR : Do you know that? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : He celebrated his birthday, are you sure about it? ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

You please tell me the date ...*(Interruptions)* He should not make wrong allegations ...*(Interruptions)* It is right? ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : We will verify the date ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, no, Shri Sirpotdar, please resume your seat.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has not uttered any unparliamentary word. When you get your chance to speak, you refute it.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Sirpotdar, please ask your Members to resume their seats.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, he should not name persons ...*(Interruptions)* What is this? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : When your Party is not taking the initiative ...*(Interruptions)* The Hon. Speaker has already asked all the political Parties ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no unparliamentary word.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing will go on record.

*(Interruptions)**

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Muttemwar, you please do not yield. You must address the Chair.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Sir, thank you for giving me protection ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Sirpotdar, you are going to speak on this subject and then you refute it.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, it is a good subject and everybody should speak by rising above Party lines ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your name is there in the list of speakers. You refute whatever you want to when you speak.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Sir, as I said earlier also that the State of Maharashtra has been a leading State which once occupied the number one position amongst all the States of the country, however, the incidents that have been occurring now-a-days have never occurred in the last fifty years. I am saying it with full sense of responsibility.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : No running commentary please.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Sir, such an instance of suicides has never occurred in Maharashtra earlier. In 1972 ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not speak like this. I have seen you. Do not do that. You are a new Member. There is a way to express your opinion here, not by giving a running commentary like this. There should be no running commentary.

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Sir, such a famine occurred in Maharashtra in 1972 and at that time, employment was provided to eight lakh people under various schemes. The then Chief Minister and the leader of the farmers. Late Shri Vasant Rao Ji Naik had said at that time that the farmers are self-respecting people. They do not want alms. They are prepared to work. When this problem came up before the then Government, the loans were waived off; new loans were disbursed and fresh seeds given to them, but no such measure was taken this year. Recently the Prime Minister had announced that no injustice will be done to the farmers. That we are concerned with the farmers and we are worried about the rise in the cases of suicide. According to the figures furnished by the Hon'ble Minister, the number of such cases is 236 in Andhra Pradesh—and as is being reported that it has touched the 300 mark now—29 in Karnataka and 51 in Maharashtra which stands at 52 now. In this way, the number of such cases is rising day by day. We are holding a discussion in the House but it is not having any impact on the Government and its machinery and we talk of discussing the matter by rising above the party line. All of us elected to the Parliament are responsible for resolving this problem. Despite the steps taken by the Government, we have been unable to prevent the occurrence of suicides. This is not only a matter of regret, rather it is a matter of shame for all of us. I would like that a full day discussion should be held on this issue. Several Members would like to express their views on the subject from our side. The other day, Hon'ble Minister, Shri Sompal said that he is going to introduce in the House a concrete programme regarding concessions and facilities proposed to be given in this regard. The facilities announced so far are not going to be of much help in resolving the problems of the farmers. In my view, a large scale relief package has not been provided to the farmers so far. Through you, I urge upon the House to ensure that a compensation of not merely one-two lakh rupees but at least five lakh rupees is given to the families of the farmers who have committed suicide.

Nobody sacrifices one's life for money. In view of the crisis that their families are passing through, we should liberally help them. As for the loans due from farmers, if they are unable to return the loans, I would request the House to waive off the loans because we have waived off loans on earlier occasions also in various sectors. If an industrialist borrows crores of rupees from banks, diverts it for setting up different

[Shri Vilas Muttemwar]

companies and declares his unit to be a sick unit, the Government and the banks write off the loans. When our Parliament and banks can write off the loans to the tune of crores of rupees so liberally, we should show such generosity in the case of farmers also and waive off their loans.

Sir, I am proud to say that when my party was in power in 1981, Shri Antulay was the Chief Minister of Maharashtra. Right after coming into power, he waived off the loans of farmers. The same may be done this time also. Once again, I would like to request that the Government should take an initiative to write off the loans of the farmers. The Union Government should instruct the State Government to supply such inputs as the seeds, fertilizers etc. for sowing the crops. New loans should be granted for sowing new crops and the recovery should be made in instalments allowing a gap of seven years. Such instructions should be given to the financial institutions disbursing loans such as the NABARD, District Central Co-operative Bank, Rural Development Banks. Strong steps are taken to recover loans from the farmers. Their belongings are thrown away, they are evicted from their homes and their livestock are taken away. Such practice should be stopped.

[English]

SHRI RAVI SITARAM NAIK (Panaji) : May I point out, Sir, that there is no quorum in the House. A very few people are present from the ruling party.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The bell is being rung—Now there is a quorum. The Hon. Member, Shri Muttemwar may continue.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, a discussion was held the other day also. I have the debate of that day with me. On that day, Hon'ble Prime Minister himself had stated that a full day discussion should be held on this subject. We want full discussion and we are prepared to sit here throughout.

It is rather unfortunate that it is not so. The person who approved of it, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs himself is absent. The attitude of the Government towards such a serious issue is all too evident ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nothing but what Shri Muttemwar speaks will go on record.

(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have a copy of the debate with me wherein the Prime Minister had stated that he will sit here throughout the discussion. That is why I am mentioning it... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : If you address them, there will be more interruptions. You should not answer them.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : There will be no lunch hour today.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, as I was saying that 52 people have committed suicide in Maharashtra. In a reply given that day, it was stated that a compensation of one lakh rupees has been given in twelve cases and in seven cases, a compensation of fifty thousand rupees has been given. That is why I was raising this issue regarding compensation—now whether it is decided by the Central Government or the State Government—but there should be no discrimination in the matter of granting compensation. Same amount of compensation should be given to all and that should be the maximum. As I have demanded earlier also that an amount of five lakh rupees should be given.

Secondly, the seeds and the chemical fertilizers available in the market are adulterated. Several such instances have come to notice wherein the farmers have suffered losses due to this very reason and the farmers have committed suicide because of this reason. The punishment for adulteration was seven years which has since been reduced to three years ... (Interruptions) The Sentence was reduced to three years by an ordinance. Whereas in this case—where the farmers have been forced to commit suicide—provision should be made for more stringent punishment so that people dare not commit the offence of adulteration. However as I see it, we have given a relaxation in punishment to the offenders. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I belong to Vidarbha region. Out of the 52 cases that have occurred in Maharashtra, 26 have occurred in Vidarbha alone. Vidarbha has always been neglected in each and every field, whether it is the case of providing irrigation facilities, or the funds. The people of that area have been continuously requesting the House and the country to allow for the formation of a separate State so that they may undertake the development work by themselves. Had their demand been met, the farmers would not have had to undergo suffering.

Four thousand megawatt of power is generated in Vidarbha whereas only 800 megawatt power is supplied in this region. The rest is supplied to Mumbai, Pune, Thane, Sholapur and Kolhapur. The rate per unit of electricity is the same for Mumbai, Nagpur and Vidarbha. The Government of Maharashtra has spent two thousand crore rupees for transmission of power. One and a half lakh applications submitted by the farmers to

the Electricity Board for power connection to help run their pump-sets are lying pending and the farmers are not being given power connections. There are 2,82,000 power pumps in Vidarbha whereas in District Nasik, there are 3,18,000 pumps. There are 22 lakh pumps throughout the State of Maharashtra—whereas Vidarbha which generates 4000 megawatt of power, gets the power supply to run only 2,22,000 pumps. One and a half lakh applications for granting power connections are lying pending before the State Government. This is the state of imbalance and gross neglect and that is why, the farmers of that area are committing suicide. It is a very serious matter. Through you, I would request the Government to take some concrete steps in this regard so that no farmer from any State is forced to commit suicide and rather he should be enlivened with such a feeling that whenever such an occasion arises, the Government of the land, the Members of Parliament, the laws and the constitution will come to his rescue. If we are unable to generate such a confidence in the farmers, all our discussion will remain futile. I am hopeful that the Members of Parliament, the Prime Minister and the Cabinet Ministers will respect my sentiments. With this, I conclude my speech.

SHRI AMAR PAL SINGH (Meerut) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, in 1997-98, the use of inferior pesticides, taking loans from the local moneylenders at higher interest of natural calamities or financial constraints were some of the reasons due to which the cotton-growers were forced to commit suicide. However we will have to review the present position keeping in view the position prevalent in 1996-97. A bumper crop of cotton was reported in 1996-97 and the Government was unable to procure the entire lot, due to which the farmers faced financial ruin.

India is an agricultural country and the farmer of our country is producing foodgrains for 100 crore people. Nothing can be more grave than this that the farmer who feeds 100 crore people is unable to afford two square meals for himself and his family or is forced to commit suicide or sell his children due to financial constraints. When the farmers faced financial mess in 1996-97, it was very natural for the production level to dip lower in 1997-98 because the farmers did not have any money for purchasing superior quality seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. He did not get loans in time. In 1987-88 also, 37 cotton growers had committed suicide in Andhra Pradesh and then a Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Deputy Governor of Reserve Bank, Shri P.D. Ojha, however no Government has so far made public the recommendation given by the committee constituted in 1987-88 and the recommendations have not been implemented either. The House and the people of the country are unaware of the contents of the report of that Committee. What could be more unfortunate for the farmers that if they increase the production of wheat, the wheat-growers

face huge losses. Similarly when sugarcane, potatoes, onions and cotton are produced in large quantities, the growers are financially ruined.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we had a bumper crop of sugarcane in 1977-78, 1991-92 and 1995-96, however the farmers were forced to burn their crop in the fields. Similarly we had a bumper crop of onion in 1994-95, but the onion turned rotten and the farmers were unable to recover their costs. The crop of Potato met the same fate in 1996-97. In 1995-96, rubber was imported and when the farmers produced rubber in large quantity in 1997-98, the rubber-growers were financially devastated.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this House has to think over the question of giving protection to the farmer at the time of peak production of crop. Farmer lands himself in the financial crisis by getting maximum yield of its crop and even then the Government does not provide him any protection. In every corner of the world, if the need arises the excess production is thrown into the sea but the financial exploitation of farmer is not tolerated. In our country, situation is just the opposite. Peak production in one year has a negative effect and the next year production slumps. I would like to quote the example of sugarcane. The Government was exporting sugar in the year 1991-92 when sugarcane farmer was facing financial constraints. Due to financial difficulties, the farmer's crop cycle gets disturbed and production decreases consequently. The country had to again import sugar in the year 1994-95. Not only sugar-but in all crops, the scene is the same. We have to stop this. Recently, Shri Sharad Joshi started an agitation in Maharashtra on the price of onion. In 1994-95, onion crop was rotten which led to steep increase in its price. What are the factors which contribute to such a situation? The country can progress much if the economic exploitation of the farmers is checked and full protection is provided to them in the year when they produce maximum crop. Then the farmers will not be forced to commit suicide and their produce could be exported every year. Only the farmer can change the economic situation of the country. Were the State Governments not imposing tax before 1974. Now barriers have been installed on the border of every State. All restrictions are going to be removed on 1500 items of goods being imported from SAARC countries by the year 2002. But in our own country restrictions are imposed in the name of Mandi Parishad or Trade Tax etc. A farmer cannot carry his crop from one State to another. Hon'ble Shri Sompal is present here. I had raised the matter under rule 377 on 30th March and also under an Unstarred Question that the farmers should have the liberty to take his crop and crop based products and bi-products all over the country. In his reply, the hon'ble Minister stated that barring paddy's movement in Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh the farmer can take all crop from one State to another. Baggot, the

[Shri Amar Pal Singh]

constituency of the Hon'ble Minister is adjacent to Haryana Border. I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister towards the fact that when there is excess production of paddy crop in Uttar Pradesh, farmers try to take it to Haryana but they are stopped on the border. They have to produce no objection certificate from the Mandi Samiti. Is Molasses not the biproduct of sugarcane? They are required to take the permission of Excise Department before taking it out from the State. Same restriction has been imposed on molasses. Only Rajasthan Government has removed all these barriers. Is Rajasthan not collecting the taxes. Even the World Bank has praised this step.

My first submission to the Hon'ble Minister is to implement the recommendations of P.D.Ojha Committee which was set up in 1987-88 so that farmers may not be compelled to commit suicide. Secondly, at the time of peak crop production, Government should protect them and should continue to purchase the produce till the end. Thirdly, ten years ago, the Government had directed the banks to enlist the villages to be covered under a particular branch. Thus, the villages were tagged with the banks. But on the basis of the capacity of the farmers no limit of loan has been fixed by the bank officers till date. The banks should be asked to fix loan limit in respect of farmers in accordance with their financial capacity so that they do not face difficulties in securing loans. To face the natural calamities, Crop insurance scheme should be implemented effectively with immediate effect. I request the Government to remove all the inter-State barriers which are being put by the State Governments. It is important for national unity and will help the farmers who face hindrance in the movement of their produce from one State to another. Economic assistance from the Central Government to the State Government should be stopped if a particular State refuses to remove the barriers in respect of movement of foodgrains.

Hon'ble Minister has just now stated that farmers of Uttar Pradesh have been allowed vacuum pan crushing facility for Khandsari which will increase the recovery of sugar. It will result in avoiding the national loss, increase in the power generation capacity and payment of higher price to farmers for their sugarcane crop. But a restriction has been imposed that only the mills outside the reserve area will get this facility. This is wrong because Khandsari units which are running in reserve area are still crushing sugarcane, Sugarcane growers will not be benefited until all khandsari units are permitted to use vacuumpan facility. My submission is that to run the sugar mills smoothly no new khandsari unit should be permitted to be set up in reserved area. It is in the interest of the farmers that both sugar mills and khandsari units based on vacuumpan technology run competitively.

I request that a high powered committee should be set up to go into the suicides committed by the farmers of Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. They should be given adequate compensation and the payment of interest due to the money lenders should also be waived. Union Government should request both the State Governments to waive the recovery of the interest on the money lent by the money lenders and Government should pay the principal amount. In these States farmers did not get the loan from the banks also. So, I request the Union Government to look into all these aspects. I also submit to this House that if the farmer is saved after this serious discussion, this country will move forward on the path of economic development. I would like to tell you that the market will not run properly till the purchasing power of farmer and labourers does not go up and the industrial goods will not be sold until the purchasing power of businessman, farmer and labourers increases. India is an agriculture based country. If the farmers continue to be poor the country will also be poor and if the farmers are prosperous the country will also be prosperous and its economic situation will be improved. I request the Union Government to solve all these issues. I thank you for giving me time to speak.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR (Bikaner) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we are discussing a very important problem but I am a little disappointed as the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture is not present here. Shri Sompal is present and I have a regard for him. He has the knowledge about the life of a farmer. As this issue is concerned with 74% of the people of the country, it was necessary for the Agriculture Minister to be present in the House.

I am observing that when it comes to the problems of the farmers, we find a very few listeners in the House. Sometime, I think that if you want to punish a person make him a farmer instead of sending him to jail. No one listens to the farmer. Only we can understand his agony—only the wearer knows where the shoes pinch. Commitments should be fulfilled. He should have been present in the House if he had said so. We have a pain in our hearts which must be listened to. Whatever is going to be discussed in the House should be felt by us from the core of our hearts. Five hundred farmers have committed suicides but the Government is unmoved. Such a callousness is unheard of. Whether it is our party or some other party the country belong to all. The country depends upon the people who grow food for it. They work hard for the whole day and night in all types of weather. Shri Sompal perhaps understands it. Perhaps, he has done farming himself. He must be knowing what the chill is. I have felt it. Water freezes due to the cold and the farmer has to irrigate the field with this water and in summer he has to work under 50° temperature. Today, anyone among the members will get sun-stroke if he works in the fields under such conditions. But, the question is that we do

not understand the agony of the farmer. Nobody gives weightage to the work done by the farmers. I have spoken a lot on this subject. I seldom agree with others on this issue. Whether it is my Government or your Government, I have always taken a defiant stand on this question. It is all right that nuclear explosion has been conducted in the country. Our enemies, friends and even our neighbouring countries have also conducted the same test.

It can go on like this. But what about the time bomb of population explosion which is being created here and which is more dangerous than this bomb. What is being done in this regard? Earlier we were only 33 crore and now this figure has risen to 99 crore. We formulated a policy of land ceiling and land was distributed accordingly. But what is the present structure of land in this country. What will be the ultimate result of it if population keep on growing with the present speed? In a family where after imposition of land ceiling three generation came into existence what is the size of the land holding with them? Earlier, there was a father with two sons and now those two sons may have three, four, six or eight sons. The land given to this family may be 17 acre or 12½ acre and now with its division among to a football field only. What will be the consequences of the unemployment prevailing among educated youth in the villages. What they will do? Where will they go? They may try to move towards cities where they would be forced to live in slums and create more slums and filthy conditions. They would fight each other for employment and for their survival. No one is paying any attention towards it. Whether I had been in ruling party or in opposition. I have always stressed the need for curbing population growth or it will pose a serious problem before the country. Today farmers are dying, 500 farmers have committed suicide, tomorrow one thousand farmers will commit suicide and then three thousand. In such a situation if farmers will find me and you there they will try to beat us because as you find... (Interruptions) Please listen to what I am saying here. It is a matter to be considered seriously as our future depends on it... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is outside and not here.

[Translation]

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : What is happening today. I feel that even, 50 years after independence people are not getting drinking water as per their requirement. Here people resort to strike, break pitchers if for one day water and power is not supplied... (Interruptions)

[English]

I am sorry, I am being interrupted. Please do not interrupt me.

[Translation]

I trying to express my feelings. I would like to tell this to you. I am unable to understand as to why hon. Prime Minister has not come in the House.

[English]

He should been here. I demand his presence in the House because it is so volatile issue which has to be heard. It has to be heard throughout the country. Five hundred people have committed suicide and nobody listens to them. The State Governments are sleeping and so is the case with the Central Government here.

SHRI A.C. JOS (Mukundapuram) : Even that side is empty.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : I do not mind whether it is empty or not because I have already seen this.

[Translation]

I know that and for the last 17 or 18 years I have experienced that issues regarding welfare of farmers are not given due importance.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to say that consensus should be reached on such issues. I would like to serve the country and I am ready to do anything for the welfare of farmers. How those farmers died?

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Midnapore) : Please tell how those farmers died?

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : That is what I am doing. The size of their agricultural land holding is very small and it is not sufficient for their livelihood and today investment on inputs for agriculture is essential. NABARD, co-operatives and other small institutions give small amount of loan to farmers. Indrajitji I was horrified to see dead bodies of those farmers. I was sent to southern part of India with a team by the Congress President. I visited Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka and submitted a report to hon. Prime Minister regarding the situation in those States. Hon. Prime Minister accepted the fact and blamed the State Governments for it. I do accept that it is a State subject but we cannot escape our responsibility. We should coordinate and direct the State governments about it.

It was decided that farmers will be supplied hybrid seed at a rate of Rs. 35 per kg but it could not be done. The farmers got inferior seed at a rate of Rs. 200 per kg. Later on they had to pay Rs. 500 for one kg of spurious seeds. Due to inclement weather farmer suffered a huge loss. Later on he tried insecticide and pesticides to save his crop. Due to supply of spurious pesticides he was ruined totally.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the agricultural department is not functioning properly. Agricultural services are not being rendered at all. They are not accountable to anyone. Crops of 'tur' and cotton were destroyed totally. You will

[Shri Balram Jakhar]

be surprised to know that farmers had borrowed money at a higher rate of interest for raising these crops and thus they had to commit suicide. When there was Unionist Government in Punjab, Sir Chhotu Ram was a Minister. He enacted a law under which no one could attach the land, house, buffalo or any property of farmers. This law was opposed tooth and nail as black law. Earlier money lenders used to attach the land, house or buffalo of farmers if he failed to return the loan, but since enactment of this law now no one can attach land, houses or buffalo of farmers.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, so far the issue of committing suicide by farmers in Southern part of the country is concerned, I would like to tell that they had borrowed money at 40 or 50 per cent rate of interest. How farmers could repay that amount when they are unable to pay the loan taken at 9, 10 or 11 per cent interest. NABARD and cooperatives provide loan to farmers at a low rate of interest and even that cannot be repaid by them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had been to Warrangal where farmers were on a month long strike. Naiduji also came there. I discussed the reason of the strike with them. They told that strike was held because governmental agencies had not purchased their produce. Even if they purchased the produce from farmers, it was done at a lower price. Cotton was purchased at a rate of Rs. 1600-1700 whereas market rate at that time was Rs. 2300 or Rs. 2400 per quintal. Now in such a situation farmers were compelled to commit suicide. I met the sister and wife of one of such farmers. They told that payment for 200 tonnes of sugarcane supplied two years ago is still due from sugarmills. In this way crores of rupees of farmers are still due on sugarmills. No attention is being paid towards it whereas money lender tries to harass them for repayment of loans taken from them.

14.00 hrs.

(SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *In the Chair*)

I would like to say that it is not a good beginning. Consequences of such a decision would be quite explosive. This will result in violence, people will fight and kill each other. I had visited the area. What is the solution of this problem? State Government should have taken remedial measures and visited the spot but it was not done. Chief Minister of the State has visited the area only once. Earlier report of suicide by one farmer came, then two and later on death of ten persons was reported. Is this Government sleeping? Is it not accountable to anyone? Chief Minister had gone there and given assurance for purchase of cotton and but it was not done. I asked Naiduji that he had given that assurance to farmers but he tried to evade this issue. It should not be so. The State Government had the Union Government, both are working on the same line. I do not understand as to how long it will continue. It

is a daylight robbery. Farmers are compelled to pay 50 percent interest, it is a loot.

[English]

You are not taking any action. These are daylight robberies.

[Translation]

Such persons should be hanged. Moratorium should be imposed. One may charge 10 percent interest for his money but 50 percent interest on loan is too much. Why is it happening? What will be the consequences of such incidents?

Now I would like to take up the issue of compensation. Crops have been ruined but the country requires another crop, the children and family members of those, who died also need food and clothing. They should be made to stand on their feet. I know that no Government would be able to compensate fully the loss suffered by farmers, but atleast they should be provided seeds, fertilizers and other necessary inputs to raise next crop and to help them stand on their feet on this issue dharna is being staged in the Assembly. No one is realising or showing any concern towards their problems. It has been stated in the assembly that 140 persons died whereas this number is about 350. Later on they admitted that 199 persons died. I told them that compensation should be given to families of those farmers. In some families there is not a single adult person who can earn livelihood. At one place I saw thirteen widows with small children. They did not have even five or three acres of land. Their loans should be waived off. As I have mentioned just now that an amount of one, two or five lakh as compensation to those families is not sufficient. I know that Government cannot provide more but efforts should be made to help them stand on their feet.

Shri Sompalji, please pay attention towards it. I have already stated that Calamity Relief Fund under the charge of hon. Prime Minister consists of a meagre amount and arrangements should be made to augment this fund. But so far nothing has been done in this regard. The insurance scheme, under which Rs. 10,000 is given cannot be considered adequate. A comprehensive insurance scheme should be formulated and premium for it should be charged from farmers, who are economically sound. In case of fire in a factory one gets money from insurance companies, the loan given by banks to them is waived off but what about farmers? You provide 8½ percent bonus to persons, who are not working properly but the farmers, who work very hard are not given only incentive. There is a saying in Punjab that female monkey gets gram whereas the bear gets the beating. We bear the burden of subsidy. We grow crops. Earlier farmers had grown potato in huge quantity but due to lack of storage facility farmers suffered huge losses and later on the Government and

NAFED was asked to pay support price for it. I know that last time we did a good business in onion, it was exported also. But this time, there is no crop of onion. You can ask about it from the Members of Jaipur and adjoining areas. Farmers did not even recover the cost and people are facing shortage of onion. We lack post-harvest technology. There is no facility for grading, storage and transportation of crops. I started a project in this regard, now you should improve the position. In Seventh Plan a provision of Rs. 24 crore was made for it and I raised this amount to Rs. 1000 crore. This process should be continued so that storage facility could be created or some processing plant could be set up for this purpose. I would like to say that this problem cannot be solved without setting up agro-based industries.

In America only 1.9 percent population is engaged in agriculture, in Europe 6 or 7 percent, in Japan 2½ or 3 per cent and in India 70 per cent people are engaged in agriculture. How long our people will depend on this? This issue should be considered seriously. 25 to 30 percent of perishable products of our country are wasted whereas in developed countries only 1.5 or 2 percent product is wasted. Earlier Japan also faced that problem. I visited there. Japanese also came here and worked with us. We formulated a scheme for storage, processing and marketing of those products. The issue regarding setting up an agro-based consortium has not made any headway. It should be implemented. Krishi Vigyan Kendras should be set up to teach people for developing improved seeds which can also be exported. We have to compete with our counterparts in other countries. We have more manpower so we can prepare cheaper goods whereas they have less manpower and hence, their cost of production would be higher. We can earn huge foreign exchange by it but our people should be given proper training for it. Your area may have rainfall but the area in my constituency hardly gets any rain. So scarce is water there that you do not come across water point for as long as 25 miles at a stretch. You will not find water, trees and houses for a long distance. How the situation can be changed? It can be done with strong will power and proper planning on the part of the Government.

How much land can be irrigated by this water, it can be known only to persons actually engaged in this work. The person who does not have any idea about the height of a gram plant cannot formulate schemes for the welfare of farmers. Secretaries who formulate these schemes have not actually seen the fields. Sometimes, even the Minister of Agriculture does not know anything about farming. What good he will do to the farmers? Agriculture is not an easy task. The person, who himself has not done farming cannot know about it. For formulating schemes, it is necessary to know the process of farming. You are talking of water resources. What can you do in the field of irrigation?

Water can be given for that land which remained unirrigated. As Minister of Agriculture, I had sent a team from Israel to Rajasthan.

[English]

They had developed a plan.

[Translation]

There they have formulated the entire plan.

[English]

I handed it over to the State Government.

[Translation]

Three fold area can be irrigated with the water of Indira Gandhi canal itself and I have written time and again to State Government about Pilibanga, the area which I visited recently. I have been writing continuously for the past eight years. There the entire land is water logged. There about 20 lakh acres of land has submerged in water and houses have destroyed completely. The poor farmers become homeless. They were neither given any compensation for their land or for their houses. They have not been resettled anywhere. The Government acquires the land and do not give any compensation to farmers. They did not give them lease deed and kept them waiting. After this they give lease deed and ask them to come next year and after taking money they renew lease deed. What is all this, how long will it continue? How long they will go on exploiting us. There is a need to understand all these things.

If we do some work in the field of irrigation, then I would like to say that Narmada Canal passes through Rajasthan, Kutch and Saurashtra will also covered under it. In that, some area of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh will also covered under it. I told this to Shri Rao Saheb when he was Prime Minister, I said this to Shri Patelji and some former congress member's also that whatever they are doing will result in total destruction or may convert the whole area into paradise. Being coastal area the land under Narmada canal has a lot of salinity and the salt will come on the top soil once the land is water logged, thereby rendering the land unfit for cultivation. However, if sprinkler or drip irrigation is used, as is done in Israel, it can do wonders.

Then it should be on one and half crore acres of land instead of 45 lakh acres. It has to be considered as to whether it will be beneficial or not. It is only a matter of investment and time and it will not taken even two years to recover that amount. I had forced Shri Manmohan Singhji to do this. I had asked him to give subsidy for drip irrigation and sprinkler irrigation. At that time 50% subsidy to general farmers and 75% subsidy to Harijans was given. I said that you are not giving this subsidy rather farmer is giving this subsidy to you. You

[Shri Balram Jakhar]

have to spend Rs. 100/- if you have to dig up one canal, construct dam, here farmer is giving you land which has been irrigated twice and in that farmer is giving half the amount and if you have to give the other half then you are not obliging the farmer rather he is obliging you.

Similarly, prices are fixed by Government. Goods are procured by Government and it is being said that they are purchasing for consumers so they should get goods on reasonable prices. If you have the money then you can distribute wherever you like. But if you say that you are giving subsidy to farmers then it is wrong because it is he who is giving subsidy to others. You are giving subsidy to factories for manufacturing fertilizers but why you cannot give subsidy to farmers. You come with me and see the condition of villages. You can't stay there even for three days. Earlier also I said this that you take my land and reclaim it. Therefore, whatever I had said is not a light thing.

You can do wonders in the field of irrigation.

I had talked to people responsible for irrigation. Sompalji, if you want to talk about future than you have to understand my feelings. I am not talking of today, nor I am talking on behalf of any party or for myself, I am talking on behalf of 75% farmers of our country. You should see their conditions. They were ruined. That water can be utilised for growing crops. Even now, much could be done in this regard. At one place people were releasing water and were saying that water should be released at 16 or 18 depression. I have got a copy of report of Central Water Commission. In that it was written that if water is released in that depression, then within 4½ years or 5 years the city of Suratgarh will be submerged in water. I said that what happen to your intellect. I wrote a letter to the hon'ble Chief Minister. I said what are you doing. You are trying to save the farmers or ruining them. Therefore it is necessary to think how it can be corrected and how proper irrigation can be done.

So far as the question of funds is concerned the cooperatives and NABARD should be asked to give more loans to the farmers. During my tenure I made arrangement for free movement of foodgrain throughout the country. But there are some States which say that we will not allow this free movement. Though farmers of country are one. Right to life should be given to them also. If one cycle which is manufactured in Ludhiana can be sold in Calcutta and Chennai then why the produce of farmers cannot be sold in other parts of country. When the question of farmers come they refuse free movement of their goods even from one district to other. The reason stated is that the consumers will suffer. Whether it is the responsibility of the only farmers to keep people alive? We also have the right to live. You cannot make the farmers suffer to such an extent. So whatever funds you have, distribute it among all.

As far as F.C.I. is concerned, I recently went to Rajasthan. There I visited Ghadsaana Mandi, Khajuvala Mandi and several other Mandis. There the people complain that the foodgrains of the farmers are not purchased by the FCI officials in the mandis and the foodgrains of farmers are lying in the mandis. Other people purchase it at cheaper rates and sell the foodgrains somewhere else. Similarly C.C.I. is also not purchasing cotton. On the other hand they are importing cotton. I am unable to understand this situation. What was the need of importing ten lakh bales of cotton. The cotton should be exported instead. Therefore, there should be a clear-cut policy. The intentions should be clear. It is true that we want to have trade relations with other countries. But we should export when we have enough crops and if there is shortage only then we should think about importing. It should not be such that our farmers will have to suffer. We had imported four million tonnes of wheat and now again we are importing one million tonne though we have no storage facility in the country. There is no place for keeping this wheat at Southern ports. Besides this the wheat which they are importing has 36 other substances mixed which can be dangerous also.

[English]

They can destroy my agriculture. Who cares for them? I left 37.8 million tonnes in storage.

[Translation]

Grind the wheat. Let us not produce more wheat. When we have the storage capacity of only 30 thousand tonnes of wheat. Why are you importing more wheat. We already have 6 million tonnes and 6½ million tonnes of crop is awaited. We do not need any help from others. We should think over it... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonia) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am impressed with the speech of Shri Jakhar. He has been the Agriculture Minister. He has made efforts for the welfare of the farmers but he is criticizing the present Government. Whether the Present Government is responsible for it... (Interruptions)

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : We all are responsible for it... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : We are listening that. Our relationship is older than yours... (Interruptions)

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : I did not oppose you.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : A learned person like you is speaking on this important issue. I would like that you should clearly tell as to who is responsible for it. How in the fifty years, the condition of farmer has so much deteriorated?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please let him speak.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : You even do not like the farmer to speak. I was saying that an ex-Prime Minister

told me that an ex-Agriculture Minister of India is present here wearing a suit. Can we not wear suit? Whether we are not born naturally. I will try my best to make farmer wear the suit. This fight will continue. I am not opposing you. I do agree with you and I do not bother for anybody.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Jakhar has been the Minister of Agriculture for a long time and also a well known and progressive farmer. There is no doubt that he is good at this subject. I also know that he becomes sentimental while talking about the farmers. He has been the Union Minister for Agriculture and also remained the Speaker of this august House for 10 years. There are very few people with these achievements. Your knowledge about the farmer is well known. You have been on a responsible post and there have been limitations also. Shri Rajveer Singh has not stated anything improper. I do not want to go deep into that because hon'ble Speaker has already stated in the beginning to discuss the matter cutting across the party lines. I would request you to give appropriate suggestions rather than speaking emotionally. We will definitely consider those suggestions.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : I did not talk about any party politics. I did not spare anyone including myself. What I have stated now, are suggestions. I have talked about exports, agro-based harvest technology to be used for storage. These are all suggestions. I will not talk anything improper. My discussion is not biased. I always speak truth and till I have confidence, I will speak truth.

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA : You say like you expect all these things.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : Not only this, the crop of cotton has been destroyed in Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan.

Last year, there was total devastation. Hon'ble Members, please do not go out of the House, please sit. I would like to say that the problem of water logging has arisen in Muktasar, Malout and Faridkot areas due to our mismanagement of water and narrow thinking. We do not want to share our water with other States, even if we suffer from excess water. I would say that we should share our resources and it will pave way for our progress. Proper arrangements for drainage should also be made and we should use only that much of water which our land can absorb.

So far as the question of agriculture universities is concerned, we should see the amount of grant provided to them and how far it has helped the farmers. We had set up Krishi Vigyan Kendras according to our need. Government should take steps for smooth functioning of Krishi Vigyan Kendras. Our Government have laid foundations for it and the present Government should see how effectively these kendras can function.

[English]

This is just a constructive suggestion. I am not criticising anybody. I am just pouring out the pains in my heart which I feel.

[Translation]

Our farmers work in the fields in the 50-51 degree temperature. I visited a village recently where I met an old lady of 90 years. She stated that they require drinking water. So, this is the situation. I would like to tell the Minister of Irrigation and you that if this problem can be solved through lift irrigation then we should adopt it. Another matter of contention is that we want to decrease the irrigation potentiality. But we have to think again over it. In my view, there is another way of solving this problem and that is to use the irrigation facilities appropriately. Only then, we can make progress. So far as drip irrigation is concerned, I would like to quote an example. A person living in a village near Mysore has 12 acres of land. That man grows sugarcane in 3 acres of land and two water pumps are being used for irrigation. He tried that by using the pump for 5 hours, he should grow sugarcane in the whole 12 acres of land. He has done the same and 150% production was made. The question is how does it happen. There is need to think about it. Moreover, I would like to say that cooperatives should be strengthened and a legislation can be brought in this regard. I had made efforts in this regard but now the matter is hanging in between. There is a couplet.

"Bahut shor suntey they, pehlu main dil ke
Jo chira to katra-a-khun bhi, na nikla."
...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMPAL : Sir, I want to say that when hon'ble member was not present here, how cooperation could be made.

SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR : Sir, there is need to think as to how the work is to be accomplished. During my tenure, I had prepared the agricultural policy. There can be shortcomings in that. I am not all wise that I could not commit mistakes. I would like that policy to be implemented with necessary improvements. We are ready to cooperate you in this regard. You should try to make people stand on their own feet. I would also like to say that farmers should be given remunerative prices of their produce. I want to say one more thing. The wheat which the Government is going to import should be distributed after grinding because we do not have storage facility to store the wheat seeds. The wheat you are going to import will cost you Rs. 900 per quintal but our farmers are selling it at Rs. 510 per quintal as they can not store it. They are helpless as they do not have money. What could be more compelling than a farmer has to bring its crop in the 'Mand' after harvesting it. However when the Government refuses to purchase it, he is forced to sell it for Rs. 400-450. If he had money or the Government may provide so through the bank, he could have kept the produce at home and get Rs.

[Shri Balram Jakhar]

700-800/- qu. by selling it after 6 months. But farmers are not helped by the Government. Government can give the money to its employees but not to farmers. But these employees work as per their own wishes. When the problems of farmers are discussed, it is concluded in one or two sentences. However, it is upto you to find the solution to the problem.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, not taking much more time of the House, I would like to say that please help the farmers. We are with you. If you will do good work for them, your work will be appreciated.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all, I must thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the prevailing conditions of farmers in Southern State and specially in Kerala. Now it may be stated that suicide as such has not been committed in Kerala. As we all know, Kerala is a State which is producing commercial crops such as rubber, copra which is a coconut produce, pepper, arecanut, cardamon etc. Now we do admit that our State is also deficit in foodgrains. Now I must inform the Government about the wretched conditions being faced by the farmers of Kerala. I wish to deal with each crop with their specific issues.

First of all, let me deal with the wretched conditions of coconut growers in Kerala. There are about 30 lakhs of coconut growers in Kerala. Kerala is the first State to have implemented the Land Reforms Act. Most of the farmers are small holders. That is why, I told you at the outset that there are about 25 or 26 lakhs of small growers of coconut in Kerala. Their condition is very very pitiable. The State Government has taken some steps. But that alone will not solve the problem. Now the main question is that they are not getting remunerative prices. I may be permitted to bring out certain statistics regarding the price fluctuations.

Copra of coconut, as such, is not having a stable market. It is varied from time to time due to many reasons. I am not going to deal with all those reasons. First of all, you must know that the word 'Kerala' is derived from the word 'coconut'. Kera is a word meant for coconut crop. The State itself is named after coconut crop. Our land is a land of coconut farms. If you travel State of Kerala from South to North on the coastal areas, you will see lakhs and lakhs of coconut farms stretching all over the State.

People are living within that small area. The farmers are having only one acre or two acres but not more than three acres. As I have already mentioned, their number may come about to 25 lakh. Their main source of income is derived from selling the coconut tree once in very 50 days. That is the position of coconut in Kerala.

The economy of the State will be adversely affected if there is price fluctuation in coconut. Now, the price fluctuation has become the order of the day. The coconut farmers have been put to hardships. The prices of coconut, copra and coconut oil are always on the decline. Recently, due to the Exim Policy of the Central Government, the price of coconut has come down which is alarming. The price of copra declined from Rs. 4,434 per quintal to Rs. 2,650 per quintal. You see the decline. Approximately, from Rs. 4,500, it has come down to Rs. 2,500 per quintal. So, there is a decline of about Rs. 2,000 within a span of two or three months. After the declaration of the Exim policy by Shri Ramakrishna Hegde, our hon. Minister of Commerce, the price have come down.

Now, these are the lean months where production is low. But unfortunately, we are not getting the remunerative prices even in this lean period where production is at a low level. The prices which I quoted earlier are only on record. In actual, the poor farmer will not get this price. For him, it will be far below the prices which are published. So, the condition of the coconut farmer is much worse when he is experiencing with the selling of his products. This is the position of Kerala.

Now, the State Government and the coconut farmers of Kerala are demanding a Minimum Support Price per quintal of copra. The price, now they demand, is Rs. 4,160 per quintal. Without a support price or without a Minimum Standard Price fixed, it will not be possible for the coconut farmers of Kerala to survive in the present condition. These poor farmers are sending their children for education with the income which they derive by selling coconut. Now, their condition is very deplorable, as a matter of fact.

Under the Exim policy declared by the Government of India in 1997-98, coconut and copra are now being imported. About coconut, previously, there were some restrictions. Now, all those restrictions have been removed. So, copra and coconut can be freely imported in India without any condition. And, this has adversely affected the home market. Without curtaining the important, the coconut farmers of Kerala can never survive.

Further, there is another difficulty also. The import duty of vegetable oil has been reduced from 65 per cent during 1994 to 30 per cent during 1995.

That also will show that the living condition of coconut growth farmers has come down to a considerable extent. Again it was reduced to 20 per cent in 1986. These measures have a depressing effect on the prices of coconut oil and copra. This is another problem.

Further, import of palm oil has been permitted under Open General Licence as a result of which coconut oil is facing serious competition in the domestic market. It

is reported that nearly 1.3 lakh tonnes of palm oil has been imported into the country during 1997. It is used largely for mixing with coconut and other edible oils. The imported palm oil is mixed with the domestic coconut oil and sold in the market at reduced prices. Further, coconut oil and copra imported from Philippines and Sri Lanka are understood to be of poor quality when compared to the coconut oil of Kerala which is available in the market. Some of them are fungus infected and they will be hazardous for health also. So, it is dangerous to use the imported coconut oil from Philippines and Sri Lanka. It will not be of better quality when you compare it with the quality of coconut oil produced in Kerala. We have been telling the Government of India all these things for quite some time. There were Dharnas and there were Memoranda submitted by the Kerala Government as well as the coconut growing farmers of Kerala. But nothing has materialised, nothing has been done so far to better the conditions of the coconut growers of Kerala.

So, we suggest at least three measures for making remunerative prices available to coconut farmers in Kerala. Firstly, the minimum support price for copra should be adequately raised to make it commensurate and the same may be announced without any further delay. The Central Government should take a decision to declare that there is a minimum support price for copra. Without this the condition of the coconut growers in Kerala will never improve. But they do not believe in committing suicide. Committing suicide is no solution to the problem. Our people are educated and the State is totally educated. So, they will not think of committing suicide to solve this problem. But still they are suffering. So, the first thing the Government of India will have to do is to declare a minimum support price for coconut. I would suggest that the minimum support price for coconut should be fixed at Rs. 4150 per quintal. We have worked it out. The Kerala Government has worked it out and the farmers of Kerala have also worked it out. So, the reasonable minimum price that can be fixed in the existing condition will be Rs. 4150 per quintal.

The second aspect of the question is to ban import of coconut oil and palm oil. I would assure the hon. Minister that Kerala will produce the required quantum of coconut oil for the home market consumption. Why should you import coconut oil from Philippines and Sri Lanka which is of no use and dangerous for health also? So, the second request is to ban the import of coconut oil from abroad.

Thirdly, the Government should reduce the import duty on certain oils and the *status quo* should be maintained. For that purpose, increase the import duty on vegetable oil from the present twenty per cent to sixty-five per cent as a precautionary measure for home produced coconut oil. The Government of India, going by the Exim policy, has reduced it to twenty per cent. I

would request the Government of India to increase it to fifty per cent which was there before. Without this, the coconut growers of Kerala cannot survive.

Finally, ban the import of coconut products like the coconut cream, coconut milk powder etc. These are some of the products that are being imported. But we can tell the Government that Kerala can produce the best coconut cream available anywhere in the world. And certainly Kerala farmers are producing the most delicious coconut milk powder in the world. So, when the conditions are such, why should you import coconut cream and coconut milk powder from abroad? They are doing it for ages. Even the land is named after the coconut farms. This is the first crop for remunerative prices so far as the State of Kerala is concerned.

Now, I will come to the issue of rubber. The only rubber producing State in India is Kerala. Ninety per cent of the natural rubber is produced in Kerala. The economy of the State, to a considerable extent, depends on the price of this produce. Rubber is also on the same footing as that of coconut. The price has declined from Rs. 50 in May, 1995 to Rs. 49 in May, 1996 per kg. It further declined to Rs. 39 in May, 1997. Please see the gradual decline. Every year it is declining. Now, the price has gone down to Rs. 25 per kg. I would like to ask the hon. Minister whether the rubber growers of Kerala should commit suicide. What is the way out? A produce which was getting Rs. 58 a few years ago is getting only Rs. 25 per kg. now. This is the wretched condition of the rubber growers of Kerala. This is the only State which produces rubber. This State enjoys the monopoly. We have staged *dharnas* also. What is the present condition? The rubber producers are not big land owners. Some people are owning five acres; some people have three acres, two acres etc. They are all small land holders. They are adversely affected. There is no other go for rubber growers of Kerala. Their condition is so wretched that they find it difficult to live in this world. I would like to know whether the hon. Minister is asking them to commit suicide *en masse*. Would it solve the problem? They are not getting the remunerative prices. This is the lean month. So, naturally the price of rubber should increase at this stage. But this year that did not take place. The prices are declining day by day.

What are the reasons for this wretched condition? What are the reasons for this decline? I will deal with those reasons now.

Firstly, the import of natural rubber has worsened the situation. Natural rubber which is being imported is of a poor quality. It is not on a par with the rubber product in Kerala. Unfortunately, to help the tyre manufacturers, the Government has removed all the restrictions on import of rubber and rubber is now imported freely in India. This is one of the major reasons for the decline in rubber prices.

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan]

Moreover, under the new Exim policy, the reduction of import duty on rubber from 25 per cent to 20 per cent has adversely affected the domestic prices. Again, the duty-free import of polythene which is used for the manufacture of synthetic rubber has adversely affected the rubber growers of Kerala.

Lastly, the Government has allowed the import of tyre from abroad.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Mavelikara) : This is done only to help big industries. That is the point.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Yes. It is to finish the farmers!

So, the Government of India may be requested to take the following measures to save the condition of rubber growers. Firstly, they have to ban the import of natural rubber.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, whether we will also get the same lag of time. All the members should get the same time period. Please write it somewhere.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Radhakrishnan, your time is over. Please conclude.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, there should be some time limit.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Yes. I am concluding.

The first condition is that there has to be a ban on import of rubber. Natural rubber should not be imported. I can assure that Kerala is capable of producing the rubber which is required for home consumption. When we are producing required quantity for home consumption, why should they import it? They have to ameliorate the conditions of the growers.

Secondly, they have to declare that Rs. 55 per kg. would be the minimum price for rubber. There must be a minimum support price of Rs. 55 per kg. Firstly, they have to do this. Moreover, they have to immediately start procuring 5,000 tonnes of natural rubber through the State Trading Corporation. That is a major demand that is being made. At the same time, I must tell the Government that procuring rubber through the STC and again delivering it in the local market will harm them and there will be no benefit to the rubber growers. So, the Government of India should make an attempt to export rubber. We will produce the best quality rubber in the world. If the Government makes an earnest attempt, it can be done.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now. It is more than enough. Please conclude.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : I am concluding, Sir. I am coming to that. I will stop now.

So, I say that arrangements may kindly be made for the export of rubber, if possible. The Government of Kerala is also making some attempts to export 5,000 tonnes of rubber through some other agencies. Export of rubber produced in India can be done by the Government of India also.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. Your Time is over. Please take your seat. Please speak again when a subject like this will be raised. At the moment, your time is over. Please conclude.

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Yes. I am concluding. I will make only one or two sentences more.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Only one minute is left. Please conclude now.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Mr. Chairman, I am concluding. Please allow me to conclude... (Interruptions)

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Sir, he himself had been the Speaker of the Kerala Assembly. So, you may give him one more minute.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : I was the Speaker in Kerala Assembly for about five years. I know to control the House.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Whether you allowed only limited number of members to speak when you were the Speaker?

[English]

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : I had been in the same Chair and I have got experience in these matters. So, let me conclude now.

There are other crops like pepper and arecanut solely grown in Kerala. All these agricultural produce require remunerative prices. Arecanut growers who are in tens of thousands are put to starvation. Then, you may also take the case of pepper growers of Kerala. They do not get a steady market. They could not sell their products on a remunerative basis. So, all pepper

growers of Kerala are put to starvation...*(Interruptions)*
 Almost all the farmers of Kerala are put to starvation. So, immediate remedial measures shall have to be taken to save the farmers from the wretched conditions in Kerala.

I thank you for having given me this opportunity to speak.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Visakhapatnam) : Sir, I just want to know one thing. There are a number of Members who would like to speak on this very important subject. If you fix the time specifically, then all of us may get a chance to speak or if you expand it for tomorrow, there will be no problem. You may please decide accordingly. Now you have to take a decision.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon'ble Members are requested to speak in brief. We know that the short speech is always effective and the lengthy speeches always become boring. The suicides committed by the farmers is a very sensitive issue. Farmers are an important part of the country. Therefore, matters related to them should be discussed seriously. All the members would like to speak on this issue.

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I request you to extend it till tomorrow.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is still lot of time, we will see.

[English]

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : This is such an important subject that every Member would like to speak. Our party has given nine names and we think that all of them would speak. So, if necessary, you may extend the time of the discussion so that all members would get an opportunity to speak. This is my request.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Sentiments of the Hon'ble members should be honoured.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR (Mumbai, North West) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Vilas Muttemwar and Shri Amarpal Singh have initiated discussion on a very important issue. I am glad to state that only the Members who have knowledge about the subject are sitting in the House and who do not have any interest in it, would have been sitting outside the House. I do not have any objection in this regard. For the last two years, I have seen that only few members are present in the House when discussion regarding the farmers is held. However, during political discussion, a large number of members are present in the House and take part in discussion. Shri Vilas Muttemwar who has initiated this discussion is not present here just now. He must have gone out for lunch as there was no lunch break today. I have no objection with regard to the points raised by him Hon'ble

Chairman has urged the members to participate in the discussion cutting across the party lines. But it is unfortunate that he left the party level in between and jumped to individual level. In my view, this problem relates not only to farmers or any Chief Minister or Prime Minister or anybody else. I have also some information with me about the points raised by him. He stated that both farmers and our country are in trouble. No Prime Minister or Chief Minister can be blamed for any natural calamity like storm or failure of rain but my point of view is that it is the responsibility of the Government to take care of the after effects of a calamity.

He stated that who got the information regarding the suicides. First of all we should find out the reasons for these 52 suicides which took place in Maharashtra. Whether it was the fear of forced recovery, failure of crops or any other circumstances which left farmers with no other alternative but to commit suicide? Is there anything like that?

[English]

An analysis of the situation is very much necessary.

[Translation]

By raising the issue of farmers who have committed suicide, five lakh should be given to every farmer so that in future they are, not compelled to commit suicide. But how will we come to know who is going to commit suicide. We come to know this only when he commits suicide, till then what was his condition, this information can be obtained either from that person who has committed suicide or from some other responsible person. That person should approach the party and tell them about the condition of house of farmer. If we do not get any relief then there is no way except to commit suicide. In my view no one has obtained this information. The information which was obtained within Maharashtra by the members from our side, from that we come to know...*(Interruptions)* you are going.

14.57 hrs.

(SHRI V. SATHIAMOORTHY *In the Chair*)

Atleast you will sit here. Before this you were Minister of Food and Civil supplies and I had talked to you earlier. If you sit here, then it will be easier for me to give reference.

The information which we have obtained from that I come to know the number of people who have committed suicide. Just now it was said that 52 people have committed suicide there. When we tried to find out the reasons, we came to know that 14 people have committed suicide. The other people have committed suicide, due to other reasons. I have collected information regarding them...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJESH PILOT (Dausa) : Why did 14 people commit suicide?

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : They could not make repayment to money lenders in time and their crop was also damaged. Their life has become miserable. They did not know how to run their family. Being the head of family, it is the responsibility of every farmer. They could not find the way out and become helpless and finally they committed suicide.

[English]

In short, this is the analysis of that suicide and nothing else.

[Translation]

Now, the relief which we decided to give, in that the norms of Government, which was like this ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA (Chandrapur) : Why did the other people commit suicide?

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : The analysis which we have made that...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : The Government of Maharashtra has made a wrong analysis that 52 people have died due to liquor or due to some other reason. They have given wrong analysis. On one hand our farmers are committing suicide you are saying that 14 people had committed suicide...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : I am talking about the information which we have collected at party level. The first thing is that I am not talking on behalf of government.

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : No, people of Mumbai do not have information about this. We people come from rural areas, therefore, atleast have sympathy for those who have committed suicide. Don't give wrong information.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : One thing I have already told that suicide is not the solution of any problem. Just now as Hon'ble Radha Krishanji had said that suicide is not the solution of any problem.

15.00 hrs.

This is not the end of problem.

[English]

This would further accentuate the problem.

[Translation]

We should not forget this.

[English]

Whenever we discuss any issue in such an august House we must put the things in a proper perspective. We must examine the entire issue and thereafter we should express our opinion. We have to take into account the steps that need to be initiated in order that such suicide cases do not recur.

[Translation]

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : We all Hon'ble Members are speaking at national level in Parliament. The wrong picture of our State should not go neither before our country nor before Hon'ble Agricultural Minister.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : I have also got information with me, that is what I am telling you. I belong to the same State.

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : If you had information, you would not have talked in this manner.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : I am also an M.P. from that State. I am also talking about farmers and fields there.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Sirpotdar, please address the Chair. You need not yield to other Members.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : I also belong to farmer's family. I know the conditions of farmers. It is not so that I had not experienced it. If I am staying in Mumbai that does not mean that I have no relation with villages. It is wrong to think. Whosoever has come to Mumbai has come from villages. First he was born in village after that he has come to Mumbai. Many people from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh or from other places have come to Mumbai for business or in search of employment. They have come from villages. This does not mean that our links with villages have been severed.

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : We are not asking as to why you are staying in Mumbai.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : I do not want to give any wrong message. We should do something so that such suicides can be avoided in future.

[English]

We should try and find out some preventive measure. That is very much necessary.

[Translation]

I am talking of preventive action and not of anything else. After all it is the responsibility of House.

[English]

What steps should be taken to avoid these suicide cases is very important..

[Translation]

We cannot do anything about what has already happened. In the entire country 500 people have committed suicide. I can give suggestion as to how it can be avoided in future. Those who have died, for

them we cannot do anything. Every life is precious. By giving one lakh or five lakh rupees we do not want to pay his value. It is an effort to give relief. Wherever riots take place as it took place in our State, the Government of Maharashtra gave Rs. one lakh as relief but we should see that such things do not happen in future. I want to say as to what we can do for that.

[English]

That is very important. We should discuss it and we should find out some remedy for this. I look at it from that angle.

[Translation]

This is the way I looked at, you should understand that, this is what I want to request you. You can express your view point in this House, can give suggestions, no one is there to prevent you. We all have been elected to this House from our own constituencies. People have elected us. Therefore let me express my point. I was speaking about norms. I am giving the information which I got as to what previous Government was giving, what changes we have brought and what our Maharashtra Government has done. If there is something wrong, you can check it. I have no objection. It is possible that there may be some shortcomings in whatever Maharashtra Government is doing, you point out that and we will try to remove those weaknesses.

[English]

You have the right to criticise the Government. There is nothing wrong in that. Just because we have the Government there does not mean that they would not commit any mistake. They are not super human beings. They also are a part and parcel of the entire society. I look at it from that angle.

[Translation]

I would like to give figures. About 18436 houses in Maharashtra have been destroyed, more than 1000 animals died, 50% crop has been destroyed in 11 lakh hectares of land. I would like to give this information to the House. It is about Vidharbha then I do not consider it separate from Maharashtra, Vidarbha is also a part of Maharashtra.

We and the people of Vidarbha are united and this unity is not recent, rather we have stood together for years and will remain united in future also. Standing together will increase our strength whereas carving out separate regions will weaken us. If anybody is nursing the idea of strengthening the Vidarbha region by making demand for a separate state of Vidarbha and asking for special facilities for it, he is mistaken because our unity will give us strength. This was so earlier also and that is why this decision was taken that the farmers who have suffered more than 75 percent losses will be compensated but the Government of Maharashtra has also decided to compensate the farmers who have

suffered 50 percent losses. Earlier a compensation of Rs. 100 per hectare was provided which has now been increased to Rs. 1000. Earlier, there was a limit of one hectare and now it has been extended to two hectares and recently the Government of Maharashtra have decided to provide assistance for upto five hectares also. Earlier taxes were levied on land-owners, however,

[English]

Stay order was given for collection of those taxes.

[Translation]

Now it has been waived off. I was trying to explain the difference in these two situations.

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : The discussion was initiated over the issue as to why so many suicidal deaths have taken place for the first time in fifty years after independence.

[English]

That is not of much concern. We should get into the reason why suicidal deaths are taking place. Maharashtra is one of the proud agriculture-based States in the country. Farmers are well to do there. Suddenly, why suicidal deaths are there in Maharashtra. That is more important to me than what the Government is doing. Please tell us why the suicide deaths are taking place in Maharashtra so that we may plan a policy for the future.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : The losses faced in the agricultural sector in Maharashtra were caused by a natural calamity. It is not as if it was a man-made crisis.

[English]

SHRI RAJESH PILOT : Was the credit policy all right?

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Credit policy is very much in order. All such facilities are available in Maharashtra. However, despite all these facilities, the farmers could not cope with it and that why they committed suicide. Others did not commit suicide, that is what I wish to explain. Not only that, just now a Member stated that the Chief Minister was celebrating his birthday at that time. Nothing could be farther from truth. Our Chief Minister visited the houses of the farmers who had suffered losses. Our Revenue Minister also visited each and every home, talked to the affected people to find out as to what sort of relief may be provided for them. Our Chief Minister went to each and every house and talked to the people to know as to what sort of job opportunities or what kind of relief may be provided for these households which do not have any earning member left.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The time is very limited. Please conclude in two minutes.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : I am coming to the same point. Whenever I start my argument, I am being disturbed. It is not proper. A number of Members have spoken so far and not a single Member was disturbed.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have want only given time to Shri Pilot. Now, please come to the subject.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : I was trying to pass on the information that a survey has been conducted by our party to find out the probable remedy and a decision was also taken regarding measures to be undertaken in future. The party has collected funds from several people which have been disbursed to the affected families and apart from this, we talked to them to find out as to what sort of relief may be provided to them for the time being.

[English]

The Government will take all precautionary measures but it is our responsibility—not the responsibility of the people of Maharashtra alone to help the people in need.

[Translation]

We have been trying to keep it away from party politics. Under no circumstances, should this issue be allowed to fall victim to dirty politics.

The former Minister of Agriculture was expressing his views regarding wheat. Superior quality wheat is produced in our country, still we import wheat from abroad. The imported wheat is rotten, even then the people of our country are forced to consume it.

[English]

Under what circumstances was this wheat imported? One has to find it out. That aspect also has to be gone into.

[Translation]

The same is the case with sugar, onion and other produce. There is not a single commodity which is not produced in our country, still we import it.

[English]

In the case of certain rare commodities, and commodities which we are short of, like oil etc., it is different. But why should we purchase from outside and import those commodities which are in abundant supply in the country itself? That is my simple question.

[Translation]

Secondly, the farmers put in hard work and labour in the fields, however the output passes into the hands of others. The farmers are unable to enjoy the fruit of their labour and the middlemen make profit out of it. The farmers get only Rs. 10-11 per kg. for the milk whereas its market price is Rs. 18-19 per kg. Similarly there is a margin of six or seven rupees in case of all the commodities. Thus the middlemen plunder and exploit the farmers. Should this situation not be remedied? I would like to submit that the previous Government have not done anything for agricultural sector in these 50 years. 74 percent people are engaged in the agricultural sector, still the Government has not formulated any policy for them.

[English]

Seventy-four percent people are engaged in farming.

[Translation]

Then there are separate groups amongst the farmers. Some of them are prosperous and get all their work done by others while they keep sitting at home... (Interruptions) They sit at homes and loot the poor. The ones who put in hard work and produce foodgrains, get nothing in return. Then blackmarketing of foodgrains also takes place. The Government should pay attention towards it and make law in this regard. I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister to constitute a committee in this regard to advise the Government, if he so desires. I would like to tell you that a committee report was submitted in 1996-97 in this regard, however nobody is aware of the fate it met later on. Till date, it has not been presented in the Parliament and its recommendations are also not being implemented.

SHRI SOMPAL : Sir, I would like to inform the House that the document regarding the agricultural policy was submitted in 1994 and the then Government had presented in both House of Parliament the 12th report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture. You may go through the observation made therein. It is most unfortunate that even then the agricultural policy was not formulated. The Committee was constituted and it submitted its recommendations to both the House on 14.5.94.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : A Committee is constituted, still we get no tangible results. If the recommendations of the Committee are not to be implemented, I fail to understand as to why are the Committees set up in the first place.

SHRI SOMPAL : It is most unfortunate. Shri Rajesh Pilot is also raising this very aspect. It is his area of interest. Is it not a matter of regret that the Members have not read such an important report of the Committee regarding the agricultural policy. The report was presented on 14.5.94, however, the recommendations given therein have not been implemented in these four years.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : This is the misfortune of our country. We talk about the problems of farmers, but when it comes to the question of framing an agricultural policy, we back out of it. What is the reason therefor? It seems as if there are some vested interests. What I want to say is that if we wish to do something about the lot of the farmers, we should do it sincerely.

[English]

Let us work together for only farmers. When the question of labourers come, let us work together for the labourers; when the question of community development comes, let us work for that, but there should not be any politics in that. Unfortunately, what is happening in this country is that in every aspect, there is the involvement of dirty politics. Because of that we do not get results. It is an unfortunate thing.

[Translation]

The farmers do not get good quality urea. Who is responsible for this state of affairs? The livestock are pledged for seeking loans, still the loans are not forthcoming. The farmers are tired of it all. We'll have to find some way out to remove the difficulties faced by the farmers, assist them and provide them relief so as to improve their lot.

[English]

Let us create that machinery. Let the farmer go to that machinery first instead of committing suicide.

[Translation]

If we want to find a way out, it is essential that with regard to the agricultural sectors and the farmers:

[English]

Let us adopt some policy; let us adopt some guidelines in this country.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please conclude.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Thank you, Sir, I am concluding. What hurts me is that only when I speak... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have taken 24 minutes. A number of hon. Members will be participating on the same subject.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Other hon. Members have spoken for one hour or so without any disturbance. This is an unfortunate thing. Initially, if I have informed you, you would have given me 20 minutes and I would have finished my speech within 20 minutes... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. All the Members are very anxious to participate in the debate. So, you please give way to them.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : The money lenders are still operating in the villages. They lend money and the farmers depend on that loan to carry out the farming activities. If the machinery or the money lenders are not there, what alternative do the farmers have? The banks do not provide any assistance to them. No other arrangements exist for providing money to the farmers. Crop insurance is also not undertaken in our country. Now that a new policy has been introduced crop insurance will also be undertaken and once such a measure is taken, the farmers will get some relief... (Interruptions)

[English]

Whenever I start my speech, there have been disturbances continuously.

[Translation]

Still I also respect the Chair,

[English]

I know that there is a time constraint.

My humble request to the entire House is that whenever we form the policy on farmers of this country, let us take into account all these points which I have raised. You come to the conclusion first before finalising the policy. You may delay the decision. But once the decision is taken, you should see to it that the same is implemented with determination by this august House.

The incidents of suicidal cases are unfortunate. We should see to it that at the end of the day, there should not be any suicidal deaths in this country. That is the aim of today's discussion. If we achieve that purpose, I think, we have achieved something. That is my feeling.

Once again, I thank Shri Vilas Muttemwar and Shri Amar Pal Singh, in particular, for initiating this debate on this particular subject today under Rule 193, and all the other hon. Members, in general.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, a large number of farmers have committed suicides in various parts of the country and the House is discussing the situation arising out of it. The people of the country should ponder seriously over the concern expressed in this regard by the Hon'ble Chairman while initiating the debate. I do not know whether such a large number of people belonging to a single section have committed suicides on this issue in any part of the world. Why such suicides take place and why people are compelled to take such an extreme step. It has been noticed that when a person does not see any ray of hope and feels disappointed from all sides - family, society, government, he is compelled to commit suicide. Mental disturbance, psychological and medical reasons are also behind these suicides.

[Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Government in its reply stated the other day that 316 farmers have committed suicide in Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Karnataka. But we all know that less figures are shown in official report and many suicides are shown as natural deaths. However, Government has shown 316 suicides. It was the situation prevailing a month ago. The question is not whether these suicides have stopped or not, but which are those circumstances under which these suicides were committed. In a state of despair and distress, when farmers did not get any help from any political leader or from State/Central Governments, they were compelled to commit suicide in such a large number. I could not understand that suicide can be a nation wide phenomenon. I do not understand whether such a large number of persons belonging to the same community have committed suicide on any issue in any part of the world. Sociologists and intellectuals may be knowing, but I have no idea whether such a large number of people belonging to a section of society have been compelled to commit suicide. It is a very serious matter and is stigma on our society. We must understand the causes which forced the farmers to commit suicide.

There is long list of grievances affecting the farmers. Farmer is considered a very important organ of the society in any part of the world. He produces food without which nobody can survive. Today, we talk of the concepts like food security and food management. Food security is worthless and food management is mismanagement in the absence of prosperity of farmers. Until the condition of farmers is improved, both these concepts are useless. Hon'ble Minister of Agriculture was asking for suggestions in this regard. My suggestion is that Government should seriously look into the reasons for suicide by the farmers. Suicides have been reported in three states but same would have happened in other States also. Government should be to find out the reasons for suicide, problems of farmers and the steps taken by Central/State Government in this regard. When all the doors of help would have been closed for the farmers and they would have no body to listen to their problems sympathetically, only then they would have been compelled to commit suicide on such a large scale. Therefore, my first suggestion is that the Government should look into these suicides seriously with a view to avoid recurrence of similar situation in future. Farmers should not be ignored and neglected in such a way that they are forced to commit suicide, as it has happened this time.

I would also like to say something about crop Insurance Scheme. This scheme is only for name sake. Only the big farmers and those who take loan are included under this scheme. This scheme becomes applicable only when more than half of the district is

affected by crop failure. Under the scheme district is considered a unit. Farmers have not been benefited by this scheme. When Shri Chaturanan Mishra was Agriculture Minister, he wrote a letter to all members of Parliament informing that they are going to implement a crop Insurance Scheme. My suggestion is that the village should be considered as the unit. If more than half of the crop is affected in the village, the Insurance Scheme should be applicable to it. Such arrangement should be made applicable immediately. This scheme was initiated in some districts on experimental basis but the Finance Department stopped it. They are not in the favour of farmers under any circumstances. Bureaucracy also causes a hinderance to this plan.

"Only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches."

Farmers have to work in their fields even in extreme climatic conditions which cannot be realised by the officers sitting in the air-conditioned rooms. Farmers have to face many problems and hardships and there is nobody to listen to their woes which ultimately forces them into committing suicide. My request is that the crop Insurance scheme should be implemented in an effective manner.

Farmers in all the parts of the country have to face the vagaries of nature in the form of flood and drought. If they are left with some crop, it is destroyed by the insects and other diseases. He is not able to get fertilizers in time. Even if it is provided somewhere, it is always expensive and sometimes adulterated too. The insecticides used by farmers are of spurious variety and have no effect on the insects. Even after facing all such hardships he has to pay interest and compound interest and so many other interests on the debt. Farmer is unable to bear so much of pain and, therefore, forced to commit suicide due to despair and distress.

No agricultural Policy has been furnished by you till date. During the tenure of our Government, the draft of agriculture policy was being prepared and the opinion of experts was sought. Agriculture should be accorded priority. How much was the contribution of agriculture in GDP at the time of freedom. This contribution is steadily declining and has become stagnant. More capital investment and the priority is required to be given to agriculture sector.

Just now Shri Balram Jakhar was saying that the farmer is concerned with the irrigation. He has also mentioned about the water logging. Today there is problem of flood, drought and water logging in different parts of the county. In North Bihar, 9 lakhs acres of land is affected from water logging. If some farmer procures 10 acres of land, he feels that he has enhanced his land holding. He purchases the land by saving each penny.

Today, the land of those hundred of thousand of farmers is affected from water logging, rice or even fish.

Even then he is supposed to pay revenue. 22.5 lakh acres of land in Gandak and west Kosi areas is affected from water logging. There was some correspondence between the Centre and State Government on this issue but without any outcome. All the communication remains on the paper only without any concrete outcome. For the last many years the correspondence between Central Government and State Government is going on. About 2 dozen projects pertaining to Gandak command Area are still pending. Earth work cannot be done after 15th of June.

It means that this year also people shall continue to be affected of water logging. It has been seen that in some urban areas an amount of 1 lakh or so is spent for water drainage. Now the villagers are saying that they are like their counterparts of Punjab and are having surplus of wheat with no storage facility. The experience is like that only. Therefore, my third suggestion is that top priority should be accorded to the problem of water logging in the entire country. We should see the allocation for wasteland development and water shed Management in the Budget. Only 10% of that is used and rest remains unutilised. It is shown on papers that so much of budget is allocated but that much is not spent. Priority should be given small irrigation projects which can give immediate results. All the pending projects connected with water logging throughout the country should be cleared on priority basis. Credit system should be simplified. In the present credit system farmer has to file a petition first and has to run from pillar to post to obtain the loan. There are many shortcomings including that of touts and corruption. Therefore, he has to pay interest and compound interest also. All this causes a lot of agony to farmers. This should be simplified. Farmers should be covered under cooperative movements so that they could easily obtain loans and good quality seeds. Certainly, farmers want to use better seeds for their crops but these are not available everywhere in the country and the farmer has to suffer losses.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the Government to provide quality seeds to the farmers and enquire about the feasibility of setting up seed farms all over the country.

International pressure is mounting upon us to stop the subsidy on fertilizers. The pressure is to stop the subsidy being given to the farmers and to increase it for industry. However, we are attentive and alert on this issue and we shall see that in no case subsidy given to farmers is curtailed rather it must be increased. It is an international conspiracy to stop the subsidy on fertilizers, pesticides, equipments and other inputs used by the farmers. According to some scientists, it is more expensive to produce foodgrains in the country than to import from outside. But they do not know that atomic weapon experiments are being made when the countries try to brow beat one another at international level. Non-

availability of food in such a large country can lead other countries to use foodgrains as food weapon to browbeat us. Therefore we should strengthen our food weapon also as we are strengthening our atomic power. Otherwise we will have to depend upon others for foodgrains. In that case, we would be falling into the trap of food weapon. It is an international conspiracy against us not to allow India to become self-reliant in the field of foodgrains.

The population of our country is 100 crore. There are some other countries which are very small in comparison to us. We have such a large population that it is equivalent to 3.5 times that of America. Area-wise America is equivalent to the area of 5 India's. This is only a ratio. India occupies only 2.4% of the world's area while it has 16% of the world's population. How much will be our population in the years 2005, 2010, 2015, 2020 and 2030 and what would be the quantum of foodgrains required during these years have to be assessed by the Government and on that basis both immediate and long-term policies are required to be formulated. National Agricultural Policy should have such provisions and immediate action plan should be formulated in such a manner that farmers may not have to commit suicide. India will be strengthened only when farmers will be prosperous. I feel that the country will be strengthened more when the peasants are happy. Instead of atomic weapons, it will be strong and prosperous farmers that will make the country strong through food weapon. Suicides of farmers cannot be tolerated and we are not going to tolerate them. With a request to accord priority to the problems of farmers, I thank the Government for allowing the discussion on this important issue under Rule 193 and for giving an opportunity to the Hon'ble Members to speak on the subject. Long live, farmers' unity.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very happy that my old colleague and friend Shri Vilas Muttemwar has raised the important issue regarding welfare of farmers for the first time in this House ... (*Interruptions*) He never had any link with farmers or farming but I congratulate him for taking care of farmers as a Member of opposition party... (*Interruptions*) After all why farmers were compelled to resort to suicide, what were reasons behind it? Has it happened suddenly? Whether farmers started committing suicide suddenly? This issue has not been taken seriously even after such a lengthy debate on it. Members have made very impressive and emotional speech in this House but Sir, through you, I would like to know from the Members of this House and not the Government as to who is responsible for it. This Government is certainly not responsible for it. The whole House is responsible for suicides committed by farmers. All the Members from ruling party as well as opposition who had been elected to this House during last 50 years are responsible for suicide of farmers. It is laxity on their part.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : It has never happened during last fifty years... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : It is an outcome of your faulty policies or evil deeds and effects of such policies are not known immediately... (*Interruptions*) Please listen to me. Our agricultural policy could not be framed even 50 years after getting independence. A debate was held here in 1994. I was a member of Standing Committee at that time. Hon. Jakhar ji is present here. He was the Minister of Agriculture at that time. A consensus report was given to the Government. I may have political differences with Jakhar ji but I support him in matters regarding solving the problems of farmers.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is really unfortunate that industrial policy of the country was formulated in 1951 whereas till today, the 1st June, 1998, our Agricultural policy could not be drafted. In such a situation what farmers can do? What has been done for farmers? Just now my friend was saying that farmers committed suicide because they were unable to repay the loan and interest incurred thereon. I would like to know as to why farmers borrowed money from money-lenders. Are the Agricultural Development Bank, Agricultural Land Development Bank or other nationalised banks not working which provide loan @ 9, 10 or 11 percent. Whether it is also not a fact that inspite, of NABARD and other Governmental institutions which provide loans to farmers at a low rate of interest news items regarding auction and attachment of land of farmers are published every now and then. Everyday such news items are published. Whether the farmers are able to repay the loans taken at a low rate of interest? When farmers are not capable of repaying loans of governmental institutions taken at 8, 9, 10 or 11 percent rate of interest then how they can afford to pay loan taken at 40 percent rate of interest.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this has not happened in a single day but is the result of faulty policies formulated by various Governments during last 50 years. As a result of which farmers had committed suicide. Proper attention has not been paid towards the problems of farmers and farming and the main reason behind it is that farmers are not organised. The organised people can take out movements for implementation of their policies whereas poor farmers cannot even hold demonstration.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not want to make long speech. I would simple say that the situation will further worsen if same type of policies are formulated and implemented in this country. Today 500 farmers have committed suicide, but if all this continues the number can reach to 5 lakh or they may be compelled to kill the people who have committed atrocities on them. The farmers are using chemical fertiliser which is making the land infertile. The medicines which have been banned in USA are being sent here. We are exploiting our motherland by excess use of chemical fertilizers. In

the greed of getting more produce with the help of fertilizer, insecticide and pesticide we are making our agricultural land barren for ever. On the one hand we are compelled to increase the quantity of chemicals and on the other hand we do not have proper irrigation facilities. The rain water goes waste into the sea. We had been unable to make proper management of water resources.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we had been unable to make proper arrangements for irrigation during the last 50 years. Sometimes our crops are destroyed by flood and sometimes by famine. But nobody bothers as to why it happens, I would request the hon. Minister of Agriculture to constitute an empowered committee to inquire into it. This problem cannot be solved by making statements here. We should decide agricultural policy and facilities be given to farmers. We talk of subsidy. Farmers are not going around with a begging bowl in their hands. They do not require subsidy. In our country some capitalists, over-enthusiastic scientists and some liberals consider the subsidy given to farmers as the reason of backwardness of the country. But have you even calculated the amount of subsidy given to them? You should take a decision as to what could be done in this field. It should be taken seriously only speeches are not going to make any difference. We can get applause of public by emotional speeches but that will not solve the problems. We should take stringent measures for it. Those who are responsible for it should be punished otherwise nothing would be done.

I would like to cite an example in this regard. The area from where I get elected is very large like a district. Hon. Minister, Sir, I would like to tell here that after fifteen years people of this area would be compelled to commit mass suicide. The area between river Ramganga and Gangas is worse affected area. This area bears the brunt of flood but it does not get water for irrigation. These rivers are curse and not boon for this area. There is no canal in both the districts, as a result of which irrigation management has become failure. The Government has declared it a dark area so boring cannot be done here. Tubewells cannot be installed here, canals are not lifting water for irrigation and there is no other arrangement for irrigation.

15.47 hrs.

(MR. SPEAKER *in the chair*)

What will happen there after 15 years when ground water will be exhausted. How fields will be irrigated? In that situation how an area with a population of 50 lakh will get food. Whether they would not be compelled to commit mass suicide.

SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH HOODA (Rohtak) : Please tell the names of those districts.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : I am mentioning the parts of Badaun and Bareilly districts which fall between

Ramganga and Budhiganga rivers. Hon. Minister and Jakharji know about this area...*(Interruptions)* His farmhouse may be there. But it is irrigated automatically. I know that he is disturbed now a days because his farm house is going to be a part of Uttranchal. It does not require irrigation but proper arrangements should be made for irrigation in the areas, where it is required.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will not take much time and you won't need to ring the bell to remind me about it. Therefore, I request you to consider the issues raised by me. In the end, I would like to say to hon. Minister of Agriculture and my other colleagues sitting here that the speeches made by Members of opposition parties give such indication that the present Government should be held responsible for these mass suicides by farmers because this incident took place during its tenure. It is really unfortunate that for everything we held the Government responsible. Pardon me for saying so but if someone does not beget a child or does not get ticket the Government is hold responsible for it. If someone has gone for some work...*(Interruptions)*

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : You were also saying the same thing when you were in opposition...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : I had never said this. You can go through my speeches...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Your party people used to say that...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : No one used to say this thing. Your hearing may have made the difference...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Now the position has changed...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY (Visakhapatnam) : We are very anxious to know your suggestions. What are your observations?

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : You please listen to me. I am saying again and again that you have no experience to sit either there or here. Shri Jakhar Saheb, you are a senior Member. You please make arrangement for organising one training camp and should teach your friends how to sit in the opposition. This point is over. I have said this to Shri Jakhar Saheb because earlier he was the Speaker. He knows the rule and regulations of parliament.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Now you would not get any opportunity...*(Interruptions)* because now you are about to come to this side...*(Interruptions)* You did not know how to stay in power and we did not know how to stay in opposition...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : You do not know how to stay either in the power or in the opposition but we are learning how to stay in power. You even did not know how to stay in the Opposition...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please address the Chair.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, he had interrupted me, that is why I had given the reply. Earlier also he used to interrupt like this when I was speaking.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : You address the Chair.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : I had replied to him when he interrupted. Earlier also these people used to interrupt during my speech, this is their habit.

SHRI SOMPAL : Let the present arrangement continue for five years, both will learn.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to request the entire House that instead of blaming each other they should take this issue seriously. If these suicides were committed, then it is not the result of Government of Shri Sompalji which has been in power for 2 months and 10 days. It is the result of our 50 years of negligence. It is not the fault of State Government. No State Government should be faulted for that. We cannot evade this thing by saying that it is the responsibility of the State Government. You have not framed any agricultural policy, the State Government is concerned with this, you have not decided anything here and you are blaming the State Government. If at all, somebody is to be blamed, it is the fault of the Congress Party because out of these 50 years, they have ruled this country for 45 years. Therefore, you are the guilty and you are blaming others for this.

I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI NADENDLA BHASKARA RAO (Khammam) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, most of us come from the farming community, but none of us is interested in the welfare of farmers. Hats off for the Indian farmers who have produced about 198 million tonnes of foodgrains so far.

As far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, the farmers have produced about 1.35 million tonnes of foodgrains. They have given their sweat and blood to us. But what have we given to them? Nothing. From us, there is no helping hand to the farmer. They are left high and dry.

[Shri Nadendla Bhaskara Rao]

In fifties, sixties and seventies, we used to beg for food from other countries. In those days, our population was only 40 crore or 50 crore. Now, our population is about 95 crore. We are providing food to all of them. It is these farmers who are responsible for this. They are supplying 19 million tonnes of food, and their target is going to be 21 million tonnes of foodgrains in the near future. They are prepared to fulfill it. In spite of that, we are not showing any interest to them. They are being cheated, if I may be allowed to use this word. They are being cheated by all sections of the society. The trader has cheated them, the Government has cheated them, and the middleman has cheated them. Everybody in the society has cheated them. Bureaucrats have cheated them. They are being supplied spurious seeds and adulterated manures. No remunerative price is being fixed or given.

Remunerative price has been fixed for wheat recently. In this regard, I met the hon. Minister and explained to him the plight of the farmers in Andhra Pradesh. A bonus of Rs. 55 has been fixed for wheat whereas paddy is not given any bonus. The paddy ryots are left like that. Most of the paddy is produced in the southern parts of the country, but they have not been given that benefit which he has accorded to the wheat ryots. What was the reason? The credit system that is available to the farmers is miserable.

The conditions which they are putting are very stringent. This is the case either with the cooperative banks or commercial banks. They are unable to tap the proper channel. They have to be motivated and make the credit facility easier for the farmers.

Then, a proper crop pattern has to be introduced in the country. Since a proper crop pattern has not been introduced in the country, if some farmers grow a particular type of crop, everybody is going in for it. So, a proper crop pattern should be introduced in the country. For example, in Andhra Pradesh, cotton has been grown by some farmers this year and everybody has gone in for cotton. Our leader, Dr. Balram Jakhar, has also visited some parts of Andhra Pradesh and he has seen how the cotton growers are suffering there.

Many cotton growers have committed suicide there, because their crop was not insured. The crop insurance scheme has completely failed. There was no proper insurance of their crops. Some foreign countries are following some method. If that system is adopted in our country also, the farmers will be benefited. But that system has not been introduced in our country so far. Some banks have introduced that system in some pockets, but not in the entire country. In Andhra Pradesh, that system is not being followed. Most of the farmers who have committed suicide were from Andhra Pradesh. About 300 farmers have committed suicide there and

they were all cotton growers. They have committed suicide because spurious seeds and spurious drugs have been supplied to them. On account of that, they suffered very much, they felt desperate and have committed suicide.

Sir, what *ex-gratia* amounts are being given by the Central Government and the State Governments? They have given Rs. One lakh to each family. Is it sufficient for the man who had grown the crop and suffered? It is not sufficient. As our hon. friend Shri Vilas Muttemwar has suggested, a minimum of Rs. Five lakh has to be fixed as *ex-gratia*.

When I met the hon. Minister, I suggested to him to follow the insurance credit card system. In that system, whatever amount the farmer takes as credit, whether it is Rs. 10,000/- Rs. 20,000/- or Rs. One lakh from the bank, that amount will be insured by the insurance company. That provision has to be there in the guidelines of the banks. Then, in case the farmer fails to return that amount, the insurance company will step in and pay the amount so that he need not commit suicide. This is the system which is prevailing in some foreign countries. This system is easy to be adopted and this system should be introduced in our country.

Sir, I was the Minister of Agriculture for some time in Andhra Pradesh and I introduced a crop insurance scheme.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Bhaskar Rao, you can continue tomorrow. I would like to make some announcements.

The House has already taken three hours on this subject. As you are aware, the subject under discussion is very important and I am sure some more Members would like to participate in this debate. If the House agrees, the discussion may be resumed tomorrow, the 2nd June, 1998, at 1.00 p.m. by dispensing with the Lunch hour.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER : All right, Thank you.

15.59 hrs.

ANNOUNCEMENT RE: ALLOTMENT OF TELEPHONE AND GAS CONNECTIONS

MR. SPEAKER : I would like to make one more announcement.

Hon. Members, it has been decided today, in consultation with the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, hon. Minister of Communications, hon. Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas, and the Leaders of Parties and Groups in Lok Sabha, to allot to each

Member 50 telephone connections and 160 gas connections per year. The telephone and gas connections so allocated will be restricted for allotment by the Members in their constituencies only.

Now, the House stands adjourned to meet again at 5.00 p.m.

1600 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Seventeen of the Clock.

1701 hrs.

The Lok Sabha reassembled at one minute past Seventeen of the Clock.

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

GENERAL BUDGET—1998-99

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Yashwant Sinha to present the Budget.

[Translation]

SHRI AJIT JOGI (Raigarh) : Sir, I would like to recite one couplet :

"Wafa karo, na karo, per wafa ki baat karo,
Hamare dard ko dekho, dawa ki baat karo."

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : Sir, I rise to present the budget for the year 1998-99.

Introduction

This is the first budget of the Government led by Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. It is a defining moment in history. It is an occasion fraught with expectation. I am very grateful to the Prime Minister for the confidence he has reposed in me and the guidance he has given me.

It has been just over ten weeks since this Government took office. But we know already that a new India is rising. And as May 11 was surely the first step, today is yet another. Certainly, a long journey lies ahead, but as history will prove, we have now begun to build a new India. This will be a strong and prosperous India—a nation self-reliant, but not autarchic, rather a nation keen to deal with the world as an equal partner with other countries. As the saying goes, "only the strong can be free. And only the productive can be strong." This is the new India that we propose to build.

The dimensions of the economic challenges that confront us today have come into sharper focus since the time I presented the interim budget before this House. While the people of India have reacted with pride over the events of May 11, some of our friends abroad have responded negatively. I am confident that these initial negative responses will be moderated as our position gets better understood, and will not have any significant impact on our economic development. On our part, our policies have to be clearly directed and firm. As Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore said "You cannot cross the sea by standing and staring at the water." We intend to cross the sea and I seek the cooperation of this August House in this national endeavour in the weeks and months ahead.

In preparing this budget, I have been guided by the famous talisman of Gandhiji. I have recalled to myself the face of the poorest and the weakest man I have seen and made sure that this budget is of use to him. This budget is rooted in Swadeshi which will be unfolded as we go along. But I shall hasten to add that Swadeshi does not mean isolation, Swadeshi means making India strong and self-reliant so that we can compete with the world and win. As our courageous Prime Minister has himself said :

Liya Haath mein Dhvaj kabhi na jhukega,
Kadam bad raha hai, kabhi na, rukega..

Flag we hold shall never bow,
Marching steps shall never halt.

Current Economic Situation

A few days ago the Economic Survey, 1997-98 was tabled in Parliament. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the economy's performance during 1997-98. In my interim budget speech I had already drawn attention to some disquieting trends: overall economic growth slowed to 5 per cent in 1997-98; agricultural growth was negative, with foodgrain production dropping to 194 million tonnes from 199 million tonnes in the previous year; growth of industrial production slackened to 4.2 per cent; export performance was weak for a second successive year, recording growth in dollar terms of less than 3 per cent; the fiscal deficit worsened to 6.1 per cent of GDP; the capital market remained in the doldrums and infrastructure bottlenecks continued to plague the economy. "Maine to chand aur sitaron ki tamanna ki thi, Mujhe raat ki syaahi ke shwa kuch na milia." But I am not daunted by the situation. Only the weak are tamed by adversity, the strong rise above them.

Key Objectives

Drawings on the national Agenda for Governance and policy statements of the Prime Minister, I believe the key objectives of this budget should be to:

[Shri Yashwant Sinha]

- Strengthen the foundations of the Indian economy to deal effectively with an inherently uncertain external environment.
- Reverse the decline in agriculture and strengthen the rural economy.
- Restore the momentum of industrial growth, especially of small scale enterprises, and revive the capital market.
- Accelerate the development of infrastructure.
- By these and other means, rapidly expand productive job opportunities.
- Give special impetus to social sector development.
- Calibrate the pace and character of integration with the world economy, while strengthening India's international economic position through revival of exports and reduced reliance on borrowed funds.
- Ensure macro-economic stability and control over inflation.
- Raise the rate of domestic savings to achieve higher national investment and thus lay the basis for faster medium-term growth. Supplement this effort through foreign investment.
- Free the productive energies of our people from unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles and undertake reforms to raise the productivity of our land, labour and capital.

Agriculture and Rural Development

As I stand here and address this august House, my thoughts wander naturally to the remote villages of India and to millions of our toiling farmers. I have no doubt in my mind that the health and dynamism of the rural economy is central to India's economic and social development. I propose to do the following for agriculture and rural development :

- Water is a critical input for agriculture. Yet, after all these years of development only 37 per cent of our cultivable land is under assured irrigation. The bulk of our poor people live in rainfed areas. We propose to accord top priority for development of rainfed areas on a watershed basis and thereby enhance agricultural productivity in a sustainable manner. Watershed Development Programmes, currently spread across several ministries and departments, will be unified and the plan allocation stepped up to Rs. 677 crore from Rs. 517 crore in RE 1997-98. Furthermore, there is an increase in the provision for the

Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme by 58 per cent over 1997-98.

- Next only to water is the question of rural credit and rural infrastructure. Under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) managed by NABARD moneys are made available to the State Governments for rural infrastructure. During the past three years about Rs. 2,500 crore has been allocated to it annually. I am pleased to announce RIDF IV with an enhanced allocation of Rs. 3,000 crore. I invite the States to come forward to utilise this important facility.
- I propose to augment NABARD's share capital by Rs. 500 crore in the current year. Government will allocate Rs. 100 crore from the budget and the RBI will contribute the balance of Rs. 400 crore. This will enable NABARD to leverage additional resources from the market to meet the credit needs of agriculture.
- The problem of rural unemployment and under-employment is a massive one. This can only be solved through self-employment. There is no reason why every craftsman, artisan and weaver cannot become an entrepreneur and run his own little enterprise. A major bottleneck however has been lack of credit facilities. Earlier NABARD had launched a limited scheme for promotion of Self Help Groups (SHG) as a channel for the flow of funds to the micro enterprises. I am asking NABARD to greatly extend the scope and coverage of the scheme so that 2 lakh Self Help Groups covering 40 lakh families can be assisted over the next five years through this scheme of micro credit. 10,000 Self Help Groups covering 2 lakh families will be assisted this year. The Reserve Bank of India is also advising commercial banks to design specific loan package to meet the needs of micro enterprises.
- I have asked the National Housing Bank to finance one lakh rural dwelling units under the Swarna Jayanti Housing Finance Scheme as against 50,000 units last year.
- I am making a provision of Rs. 265 crore to carry forward the rehabilitation and recapitalisation of the Regional Rural Banks (RRBs). Sponsor banks are being given a larger role in providing management, operational and restructuring support to RRBs.
- Farmers often face chronic problems of overdue loans due to circumstances beyond their control. They are even committed to civil prison for this default. While the repayment culture must improve, this

government is determined to create conditions so that no farmer goes to jail for a loan repayment default or is forced to commit suicide. The Reserve Bank will be issuing appropriate guidelines to the banks for hassle-free settlement of old cases of overdues. Banks will be encouraged to provide appropriate relief on accumulated interest in deserving cases. The new procedure should also help in reducing the outstanding volume of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) of the banking sector.

- NARBAD is being asked to formulate, Shri Rajesh Pilot is here and he can kindly note a model scheme for issue of Kisan Credit Cards to farmers on the basis of their holdings for uniform adoption by the banks so that the farmers may use them to readily purchase agricultural inputs such as seeds, fertilisers, pesticides etc. and draw cash for their production needs.

The ingenuity and enterprise of our farmers is today hamstrung by numerous Central and State laws and regulations relating to the production, marketing and movement of agricultural commodities. This is clearly unacceptable. My colleague, the Minister of State for Agriculture, will soon be bringing out, under the guidance of the Prime Minister, the Government's National Agricultural Policy paper which will address these constraints in a comprehensive manner. The Minister of Commerce is systematically reviewing existing controls on exports of all agricultural commodities except foodgrains. There is no reason why our farmers should not reap the benefits of access to wider global markets.

The system of agricultural cooperatives in our country is plagued by bureaucracy and political interference at many levels. As part of a concerted programme to revitalise the cooperative sector, government will shortly bring forward a model cooperative law to replace the Multi-State Cooperative Societies Act of 1984 and will encourage the States to make similar amendments in their own acts.

There has been a long standing demand from our farmers and the Ministry of Agriculture for the exclusion of farm implements and tools from the list of items reserved for manufacture by the SSI sector, so that farmers can benefit from a wider range of implements and tools at competitive prices and with requisite after sales service. This proposal had also been recommended by the Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Industry. Government have decided to accept this recommendation.

India has made commendable progress in oilseeds production in recent years. In order to establish an efficient market environment and to reduce volatility in prices in this sector, the Government is planning to introduce futures trading in edible oilseeds, their oils

and their cakes.

The existing subsidy schemes for both urea and decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilisers are being continued. However, for achieving optimum crop response ratio to fertiliser use, the use of all the three nutrients, nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K) should be balanced. This balance has been progressively distorted over time because of the low price of urea compared with decontrolled fertilisers. The NPK balance, which was 5.9:2.4:1 in 1991-92, had changed adversely to 10:2.9:1 by 1996-97. An increase in the price of urea would help restore this balance. The increase is also justified on the ground of rising costs, which have led to a more than 50 per cent increase in the subsidy on indigenously produced urea in two years between 1995-96 and RE 1997-98. It is, therefore, proposed to increase the selling price of urea by just Re. 1 per kilogram with immediate effect. (*Interruptions*)

Government is committed to provide safe drinking water to all rural habitations in the next five years. To achieve this ambitious target, a multi pronged approach to rural water supply is being adopted :

- The allocation for the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme is being enhanced from Rs. 1,302 crore in RE 1997-98 to Rs. 1,627 crore in this budget. This enhanced outlay will cover about one lakh habitations.
- As mentioned earlier, we will give a special thrust to Watershed Development Programmes. This will also ensure better results for ground water availability and conservation.
- States are being encouraged to institutionalise community-based rural water supply programmes, which secure active participation of beneficiaries to own, operate and maintain rural water supply facilities.

Over the years, programmes for alleviation of poverty and employment generation have proliferated. Each scheme is well intentioned but their multiplicity has led to needless duplication, high overhead costs, confusion at field levels and insufficient benefit to the people. It is proposed to unify the various schemes under two broad categories of Self Employment Schemes and Wage Employment Schemes. Funding and organisational patterns will be rationalised to achieve maximum beneficial impact of these programmes.

Small Scale Industry

I am now turning to the small scale industry. The SSI sector makes a valuable contribution of about 40 per cent to our total manufacturing sector production, 35 per cent to exports and employs over 160 lakh workers. Our commitment to the SSI sector is total. The commonest complaint of SSI entrepreneurs and associations are the insufficiency of timely credit and the harassment of the "Inspector Raj".

[Shri Yashwant Sinha]

On the credit problems of the SSI sector, I propose the following initiatives :

- At present, for SSI units having aggregate working capital requirements up to Rs. crore, the working capital limit is determined by the banks on the basis of a simple calculation of 20 per cent of their annual turnover. This facility is being doubled to Rs. 4 crore. This will ease the flow of bank credit to the SSI sector.
- To moderate the cost of credit to SSI units, RBI will advise the banks to accord SSI units with a good track record, the benefit of lower spreads over the prime lending rate.
- Enhanced powers would be delegated to bank managers of specialised SSI branches to ensure that most credit proposals are decided at the branch level.
- At present, Small Industrial Development Bank of India (SIDBI) is a subsidiary of IDBI and IDBI is the major shareholder is State Finance Corporations (SFCs). To equip SIDBI to play its apex role in SSI credit provision more effectively, SIDBI will be delinked from IDBI and IDBI shareholding in SFCs will be transferred to SIDBI.
- SSI units are often handicapped by delays in the settlement of their dues from larger companies. To tackle this problem, I am asking RBI to strengthen the existing mechanisms available to SSI for discounting of bills. RBI will also modify its guidelines to commercial banks on credit appraisal to give greater weight to the amount of overdue outstandings that large units have in respect of SSI supplier. My colleague, the Minister of Industry is separately bringing amendments to the Interest on Delayed Payments to Small Scale and Ancillary Industry Undertaking Act, 1993 to make the existing legislation more effective.

As for the pervasive problem of the "Inspector Raj", I shall be announcing far reaching changes in the administration of Central Excise which should help SSI units significantly. I urge all States to review their laws and regulations and make necessary changes to lighten the burden of the Inspector Raj problem of SSI units.

I shall also be announcing some tax concessions to the SSI sector later in my speech.

Private Investment in Industry

The government accords high priority to boosting private investment, including foreign investment, in industry. We must minimise bureaucratic and procedural hurdles and create an investor friendly environment.

Industrial licensing was abolished in most industrial sectors as part of the economic reforms. On reviewing the remaining handful of licensed sectors, the government have further decided to delicense coal and lignite and petroleum products.

Industrial deregulation would remain incomplete without reducing the burden imposed by the "Inspector Raj". The majority of inspectors operate under State level statutes. Government have initiated a dialogue with the State Governments to explore the consolidation of regulatory legislation relating to industry and exchange of best practices across States in carrying out the necessary inspections in the least burdensome way. I will return to this subject when I present my excise proposals.

The Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) has done a good job in promoting foreign investment and streamlining the procedures at the Central government level. Foreign investment flows have increased substantially and were estimated to be \$3.1 billion in 1997-98. About 60 per cent of investment approvals are in the energy and infrastructure sectors. It will be our objective to create conditions in which foreign investors will find India an attractive investment destination. We hope to double the inflow of foreign direct investment within next two years. Foreign investors are frequently inhibited by lack of familiarity with our systems and statutes and particular problems at the State level. To reduce such problems, we will implement a system whereby, an officer of the administrative Ministry would be designated as a monitoring officer to help processing and implementation of the project in conjunction with Central and State authorities for every foreign investment proposal exceeding Rs. 100 crore. We are committed to creating a hassle-free procedure and I would like to assure all foreign investors that a decision on their investment proposals shall be taken within a period of 90 days. It will be the personal responsibility of the monitoring officer to ensure this.

Housing

The National Agenda, identifies housing as a priority area. We will move purposefully to tackle the country's enormous housing shortage problem through partnership between government, housing finance institutions and the private sector.

- 20 lakh additional dwelling units will be built this year with 13 lakhs in rural areas and 7 lakhs in urban areas.
- The budget allocation for the Indira Awas Yojana Programme is being substantially enhanced to Rs. 1600 crore, from Rs. 1144 crore in 1997-98. The scope of this scheme is also being widened to include a loan-cum-subsidy programme.
- The Urban Land Ceiling and Regulation Act will be repealed to free the supply of usable urban land for housing construction.

- * The capital base of the Housing and Urban Development Corporation (HUDCO) is being increased by Rs. 110 crore from the budget so that it may leverage more funds for housing construction.
- * I also have some tax incentives for housing which I will outline later in my speech.

Infrastructure

The acuteness of our infrastructure problems is equalled only by our resolve to tackle them. One of the major planks of this budget is to provide strong stimulus to the infrastructure sector through large public and private investment in these sectors. This will also help to boost industrial growth and overall economic activity.

The plan outlay for the key infrastructure sectors of Energy, Transport and Communications in the revised estimates for 1997-98 was Rs. 45,252 crore. I am happy to announce that the outlay for these sectors for the current year will be Rs. 61,146 crore. This is a leap of 35 per cent. I am hopeful that this steep increase in investments will trigger industrial activity and revive rapid economic growth.

Within a few weeks of taking office, the government passed an important ordinance for establishing Central and State Electricity Regulatory Commissions with the primary objective of rationalising electricity tariffs. This will go a long way towards enhancing investor confidence in the power sector and facilitate raising resources for higher public and private investment. We have also simplified the procedures for extending sovereign counter guarantees for a few "Fast Track" power projects which were held up for long. We now expect early financial closure of these projects. The total plan outlay for Ministry of Power is being increased to Rs. 9,500 crore as against Rs. 6,738 crore in RE 1997-98.

I will draw your attention to the outstanding dues from State Electricity Boards to major public sector undertakings such as NTPC and Coal India amount to about Rs. 10,000 crore. These large outstanding dues are serious impediments to investment by these public sector undertakings. The government will evolve a guarantee scheme to cover such dues. On the strength of such guarantees, the PSUs concerned will be able to raise resources either by securitising these debts or directly entering the market for tapping resources. This would help these enterprises to raise resources to fund large projects in the power and coal sectors. The resulting investment will also boost industrial growth and investment through linkage effects.

We must build more roads and the quality of our roads must also improve. Our National Highways must be brought up to international standards. I am providing Rs. 500 crore for the National Highways Authority of India to catalyse new road projects including four-laning of existing National Highways. I shall announce some

more measures for this sector in Part B of my speech.

To enhance long-term finance for infrastructure investment in the private sector, the Infrastructure Development Finance Company Limited (IDFC) was incorporated as a non-government company in 1997. I am happy to inform the House that the IDFC has tied up its paid up equity capital of Rs. 1,000 crore, including equity participation of Rs. 400 crore by nine foreign investors and has now commenced operation. In order to put IDFC on par with other all India public Financial Institutions in the matter of fiscal incentives and fund raising benefits extended to these institutions, it is proposed to make necessary amendments in the Companies Act.

Provident funds are a potentially important source of funding for private sector infrastructure projects. The present pattern of investment prescribed for provident funds does not permit any investment in securities of private sector infrastructure projects. I propose to provide some flexibility in this regard by allowing up to 10% of the new accretion to provident funds to be invested in private sector securities which have an investment grade rating from at least two credit rating agencies. This is an enabling provision which will allow the Board of Trustees managing these funds to invest in these securities subject to their assessment of the risk-return prospect of each security.

Education

Mr. Speaker, Sir, Education is the key vehicle for social transformation. Universalisation of elementary education and eradication of illiteracy are central elements of our social policy. Government also plans to implement the Constitutional provision for making primary education free and compulsory up to fifth standard and for girls up to the college level.

This budget provides for nearly 50 per cent increase in the total budgetary allocation for Education, from Rs. 4,716 crore in the RE 1997-98 to Rs. 7,047 crore in this budget. We are committed to raising the total resource allocation for Education to 6 per cent of GDP in a phased manner.

The allocations under the Kasturba Gandhi Shiksha Yojana and the Mahila Samridhi Yojana will be integrated to support a unified Action Plan for accelerating female education.

Swami Vivekanand while exhorting the youth had said "A far greater work is the sacrifice of yourself for the benefit of your race, for the welfare of humanity." In order to harness the limitless energy of the youth, government will formulate a scheme for creation of a National Reconstruction Corps, which will mobilise youth for community-based nation building activities. The scheme will also promote self-employment youth whereby the volunteers would simultaneously be given training in vocations and entrepreneurship development for taking up self-employment vocations. An inter-

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Ministerial Committee is being set up to go into the details.

Information Technology

The Prime Minister has underlined the crucial importance of Information Technology for India. It is the fastest growing sector of the Indian economy as indeed of the world economy. It has tremendous potential for the generation of employment, incomes and export earnings. It can also provide millions of skilled jobs for women. Our Information Technology specialists and software creators are second to none in the world.

The government have set themselves a target of making India a Global Information Technology Power and one of the largest generators and exporters of software in the world within ten years. A National Information Technology Task Force, headed by the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission has been set up, to formulate a National Informatics Policy which will help achieve our objectives.

Our software companies operate in a highly competitive global market and the skilled professionals working in these companies have attractive opportunities abroad. Our companies need flexible systems of incentives to retain their human resources. They have sought permission to offer stock option schemes to their Indian employees linked to ADR/GDR issues abroad, under which their employees will be eligible for ADR/GDR stock options. In recognition of the excellent work being done in this sector, and its very special circumstances, the government have decided to formulate a special scheme to allow such options for the software sector. The details of the scheme will be notified separately.

I also have some fiscal proposals to support rapid development of this crucial sector which I will present later in my speech.

Financial Sector

A mature and well functioning financial system is essential for promoting savings, channelling investment into the most productive activities and ensuring an efficient payments mechanism. The East Asian financial crisis has highlighted the importance of prompt action to strengthen our financial system. The recently submitted Narasimham Committee Report has provided many recommendations which are being examined in consultation with RBI. However, I am happy to announce that decisions have been taken on some important recommendations.

- The relatively high level of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) in our public sector banks is a cause for concern. Net NPAs, averaging 9 per cent in 1996-97, must be brought down to below 5 per cent by the year 2000-2001.

As one way of reducing NPAs, Debt Recovery Tribunals will be strengthened and more Tribunals will be set up to cover all States.

- A few banks have particularly high NPAs. These banks will be encouraged, on an experimental basis, to establish Asset Reconstruction Companies, which will takeover the NPAs of the banks at their realisable value and swap them with special bonds to be held by the bank. The Asset Reconstruction companies will concentrate on recovery of dues to realise the maximum value for the assets transferred to them.
- To strengthen the underlying health of our banks, RBI is raising the minimum required Capital Adequacy Ratio for banks from the present 8 per cent to 9 per cent by March 31, 2000 and to 10 per cent by as early as possible thereafter. RBI will also announce certain other enhancements of prudential norms in regard to asset classifications, income recognition, risk weights, etc.
- Our financial system today works under the burden of several archaic laws regarding transfers of and transactions in properties and financial instruments. An Expert Group is being set up to propose precise legal amendments in the key laws to make the provisions consistent with modern financial and banking practices.

Non-Bank Finance Companies (NBFCs) perform an important role in our financial sector. But regulation of this sector has to improve to protect unwary small investors. The Reserve Bank of India Act was amended last year with a view to laying down a framework for improved regulation of NBFCs. RBI has recently issued guidelines for registration as also for effective regulation of NBFCs. Our objective will be to develop a framework of prudential regulations and a supervisory system which will foster the development of a healthy financial system as also provide transparent disclosure norms leading to greater depositor awareness to enable the investors to take well informed investment decisions.

Along with reform of the banking sector, it is necessary to move forward with reforms in insurance which has hitherto been a public sector monopoly. In order to provide better insurance coverage to our citizens and also to augment the flow of long-term resources for financing infrastructure, I propose to open the insurance sector to competition from private Indian companies. The Insurance Regulatory Authority will also be converted into a statutory body. Necessary legislation will be introduced later in the year.

FEMA and Money Laundering

The present Foreign Exchange Regulation Act, 1973 is outdated and is no longer in keeping with the needs

of the economy and the changes that have taken place in foreign exchange markets and transactions. We have moved to full current account convertibility. It is no longer appropriate to delfy foreign exchange as something special and maintain a burdensome and highly regulatory structure around this delfy. Accordingly, government have decided to repeal FERA and replace it with a new Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), which would be consistent with the needs of a modern economy. The new Bill will be introduced in this session of Parliament.

At the same time, I want to assure the House that the replacement of FERA by FEMA is in no way intended to give licence for illegal transactions to drug peddlers, terrorists, arms smugglers and other perpetrators of heinous economic crimes. Indeed, to protect our society from the globally recognised and, growing problem of money laundering. I also propose to bring an anti Money Laundering Bill before the House simultaneously with FEMA.

Capital Market

I am proposing a number of measures to strengthen our capital markets :

- * The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has approved the introduction of trading in stock index futures as a way of providing greater opportunities for hedging and inducing more liquidity into the market. The government will bring forward the necessary amendment to the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Act to enable derivative instruments to be treated as securities.
- * Foreign institutional investor (FII) debt funds are today allowed to invest only in listed debt securities. I propose to allow them to invest in unlisted domestic debt securities; the risk of default would be borne by the FIIs.
- * To encourage modernisation of broker services, a one time permission was given last year to stock brokers to corporatise their businesses without attracting capital gains tax. I propose to extend this exemption by one year.
- * To encourage more primary public issues, I am proposing certain changes to expand the income tax deductibility of expenses incurred on public issues.
- * After some of the turbulent events in the stock markets in recent years, a special effort must be made to restore the confidence of small investors. I am asking SEBI to devote special attention to strengthening the institutional arrangements for protecting small investors from defaults and financial failures of brokers and other market intermediaries.

Non-Resident Indians

Whenever I have travelled Mr. Speaker, Sir, abroad outside India, Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) have expressed a sincere desire to contribute meaningfully to the development of India. I believe NRIs constitute a huge, untapped potential for India growth development. I propose the following steps to encourage NRIs to participate in the development of their country of origin :

- * At present NRIs are allowed to purchase shares in Indian companies in the secondary market subject to a limit of 1 per cent of the company's total equity for individual NRIs and NRI overseas corporate bodies, with a 5 per cent limit for aggregate NRI/OCB investments in the company. These limits were imposed many years ago when our capital market regulations were much weaker and there were no rules governing acquisitions and takeovers. The situation has changed materially in both these respects. I, therefore, propose to raise the individual investment limit of 1 per cent of NRIs to 5 per cent and the aggregate limit for all NRI investments in a company from 5 per cent to 10 per cent.
- * NRIs have also complained to me that the procedures governing their participation in our share markets are extremely cumbersome and onerous. I am having these procedures thoroughly reviewed with a view to modifying them to facilitate investment by NRIs in our capital markets.
- * The Unit Trust of India will launch a new India Millennium Scheme which will be open for subscription in dollars only by NRIs. The monies collected under this scheme would be invested in shares of Indian companies with high potential for growth and in high quality Indian debt. The details of the scheme will be announced shortly.
- * The State Bank of India is launching a new Resurgent India Bond denominated in foreign currencies for subscription by NRIs. This will enable NRIs to contribute to the flow of resources for our country's development, especially for building up infrastructure. The bond will be fully repatriable and the government will extend tax concessions similar to those currently available to NRI deposits to this new bond. The details of the scheme will be notified separately. I am confident that NRIs will welcome this initiative and will contribute liberally to these Bonds.

I have one more significant announcement to make for NRI's. Government have decided to draw up a

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scheme for issuance of a Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) Card for those living abroad and having foreign passports. The PIO Card, which would be extended to persons of Indian Origin settled in countries to be specified by government would besides introducing a visa-free regime would also confer some special economic, educational, financial and cultural benefits to the NRIs. The details are being worked out.

Decentralisation and Expenditure Restructuring

Government have already appointed a Special Task Force on Devolution of Powers to States, under the Chairmanship of Shri Bhairon Singh Shekhawat, the Chief Minister of Rajasthan to examine and recommend measures for devolution of additional financial powers to the States and additional or alternative means by which States can raise more resources. The first report of the Task Force has been received. We are examining the recommendations in consultation with the RBI.

The distinction between plan and non-plan expenditures in our budgetary system has created several problems. It has led to an excessive focus on so called plan expenditures with a corresponding neglect of items such as maintenance which is classified as non-plan. Various bodies, including the Finance Commission, have advocated the elimination of the plan and non-plan distinction in the budget. I propose to constitute a Task Force, including representatives of Planning Commission, Finance Ministry, Comptroller and Auditor-General of India and State Governments to examine these issues in a comprehensive manner and to make recommendations for a functionally viable and more focussed presentation of government expenditure in the budget.

A related problem is the proliferation of Central Sector and Centrally Sponsored Schemes over the years. There is a need to rationalise these, with the objective of reducing overlaps and duplication, modifying procedures and norms and making them more easily accessible to the intended beneficiary. The Task Force, mentioned above, will also advise on this issue.

Development of North Eastern Region

The government have already decided to restructure the North Eastern Council (NEC) for speedy implementation of important infrastructural programmes in this region. Sikkim will also be included in the Council. Necessary legislation will be introduced in Parliament to effect these changes.

Furthermore, it has been decided that a non-lapsable Central Resource Pool will be created for deposit of funds from all Ministries where the plan expenditure on the North Eastern region is less than 10 per cent of the total plan allocation of the Ministry. The difference between 10 per cent of the allocation and

the actual expenditure incurred on the North Eastern region will be transferred to the Central Pool, which will be used for funding specific programmes for economic and social upliftment of the North Eastern States.

The North-Eastern Development Finance Corporation Limited (NEDFI) promoted by public sector financial institutions and banks was incorporated in 1995. NEDFI strives to respond to the specific needs of industries in the North-East. At present there is one State Financial Corporation (SEF) in Assam and twin function Industrial Development Corporations (IDCs) in some other States. In order to foster healthy and efficient growth of these institutions, I am proposing that the refinancing function for industrial loans of SFC/IDCs of the North-East will be undertaken henceforth by NEDFI, rather than IDBI/SIDBI as at present.

Disinvestment/Privatisation/PSU Reform

The regular budget takes credit for a receipt of Rs. 5,000 crore from disinvestment in the current year. In order to expedite the process the government have decided to disinvest specified portions of equity from IOC, GAIL, VSNL and CONCOR. As part of an overall strategy to restructure Indian Airlines and expand its capacity, government have decided to restructure the capital of Indian Airlines and also to undertake a phased disinvestment in this company, over three years, bringing the government's equity holding down to 49 per cent.

Some public sector undertakings have consistently incurred large losses. Experience and studies by independent organisations, have conclusively established them to be unrevivable. Nevertheless, a decision on their closure had been delayed only on account of the concern for the interest of the workers. In order to find a viable and satisfactory solution to this dilemma, the government have decided to provide a safety net to the workers of enterprises destined for closure by providing a liberal and attractive compensation package prior to closure. At present, when a unit is closed, the workers are only entitled to retrenchment compensation under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, which is only 15 days wages for each completed year of service. To make the compensation package attractive, it is proposed to make applicable the benefits of the VRS package, namely 45 days wages for each completed year of service, subject to the maximum wage or salary accruable on the basis of the balance of years of service left to all the workers of these public sector units. As a further improvement to the package, the workers of these units will also be eligible for a maximum of 60 months or 5 years salary or wages as compensation in the case of all those who have completed not less than 30 years of service. This would mean that all those who have put in more than 30 years of service will get more than the normal VRS. The other conditions of the VRS will apply and this offer will be made time bound.

A separate Restructuring Fund is being constituted for this purpose and these public sector enterprises will be advanced funds from the budget to offer a compensation package to the workers. Once the labour is separated, the assets of the company will be available for disposal at the best economic price. The proceeds of the disposal, after settling all pending liabilities, will be credited to the Restructuring Fund which will get recouped to that extent. This would enable the fund to operate on atleast a partially self-sustaining basis and it is expected that, in the course of time, budgetary support for the fund will gradually diminish.

Government have also decided that in generality of cases, the government shareholding in public sector enterprises will be brought down to 26 per cent. In cases of public sector enterprises involving strategic considerations, government will continue to retain majority holding. The interest of workers shall be protected in all cases.

Budget Estimates for 1998-99

As Hon'ble Members are aware details of the revised estimates for 1997-98 were presented along with the interim budget in March 1998. I am, therefore, not going over those estimates again. The figures that are given below are the budget estimates for 1998-99. I shall compare them with the revised estimates of 1997-98, since budget estimates are after all estimates. What really matters is the expenditure in the previous year and the increase proposed in this year's budget.

I shall now briefly go over the budget estimates for 1998-99.

For 1998-99, the total expenditure is estimated to be Rs. 268107 crore. Of this, Rs. 72,002 crore has been provided as budget support for Central, States and UT Plans and balance Rs. 1,96,105 crore is for non-plan expenditure. Hon'ble Members will be pleased to note that the budget support for the plan has been increased by Rs. 11,372 crore from Rs. 60,630 crore in revised estimates of 1997-98, which is the largest increase ever in absolute terms. Even in percentage terms the 18.8 per cent increase is the highest in the last decade, except for one year.

Plan Expenditure Central Plan

Total Central plan outlay at Rs. 1,05,187 crore will be higher by Rs. 24,154 crore from the last year's level of Rs. 81,033 crore. Gross budgetary support for the Central plan is being enhanced from Rs. 33,629 crore in the revised estimates 1997-98 to Rs. 42,464 crore. The balance will be met by the internal and extra-budgetary resources of the Central Public Sector Enterprises. Gross budgetary support for the Central plan includes provision of Rs. 5,741 crore for externally aided projects.

The plan allocations reflect our dominant priorities. The plan allocation for the Ministry of Agriculture has

been increased by 58 per cent from Rs. 1807 crore to Rs. 2,854 crore.

For 1998-99, the plan allocation for Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment is Rs. 9,912 crore, an increase of Rs. 1,556 crore over RE 1997-98.

The plan allocation for Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is Rs. 3,684 crore, an increase of 34% over RE 1997-98.

The plan allocation for the Department of Education has been increased substantially from Rs. 3,351 crore to Rs. 4,245 crore.

The plan allocation for Ministry of Welfare is being increased by 91 per cent from Rs. 804 crore to Rs. 1,539 crore. It includes Rs. 92 crore for National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation, Rs. 41 crore for National Minorities Development and Finance Corporation, Rs. 60 crore for share capital contribution to State Scheduled Castes Development Corporation, Rs. 28 crore for National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation and Rs. 10 crore for National Safai Karamachari Finance and Development Corporation.

In order to sustain our quest for excellence in frontier areas of scientific research, the plan allocation for Department of Atomic Energy is being enhanced by 68 per cent from Rs. 828 crore to Rs. 1,391 crore and the plan allocation for Department of Space is being raised by 62 per cent from Rs. 850 crore to Rs. 1,381 crore.

For tapping the potential of non-conventional energy sources, the plan allocation for the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy is being more than doubled from Rs. 190 crore to Rs. 404 crore.

The plan allocation for the Ministry of Environment and Forests is being increased by 60 per cent from Rs. 440 crore to Rs. 704 crore.

The budgetary support for the Ministry of Civil Aviation and Tourism is being more than tripled from Rs. 122 crore to Rs. 379 crore.

The plan allocation for the Department of Women & Child Development is being stepped up from Rs. 1,026 crore to Rs. 1,226 crore.

Central Assistance for States and UT's Plan

I am providing Rs. 29,538 crore as Central plan assistance to States and Union Territories in budget estimates 1998-99 compared to Rs. 27,001 crore in the revised estimates 1997-98. The normal Central Assistance for State plan is proposed to be enhanced from Rs. 12,888 crore to Rs. 15,037 crore. The Special Central Assistance for Tribal Sub-Plan is proposed to be enhanced from Rs. 330 crore to Rs. 380 crore. The Additional Central Assistance for externally aided projects is being placed at Rs. 5,000 crore. Assistance for Basic Minimum Services and Slum Development

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schemes is proposed to be enhanced from Rs. 2,873 crore to Rs. 3,760 crore.

New schemes

A new experimental crop insurance scheme is being launched in 24 selected districts to cover non-loanee farmers with a provision of Rs. 100 crore.

A new scheme of Technology Mission on cotton is being launched with a provision of Rs. 60 crore.

A new scheme for rehabilitation of tribals displaced from National Parks and project areas is being launched with a provision of Rs. 25 crore.

Non Plan Expenditure

Total non-plan expenditure in 1998-99 is estimated to be Rs. 1,96,105 crore compared to Rs. 1,74,615 crore in revised estimates 1997-98.

The provision for interest payments has increased from Rs. 65,700 crore in RE 1997-98 to Rs. 75,000 crore.

The provision for Defence expenditure has been increased substantially Mulayam Singh ji from Rs. 36,099 crore in RE 1997-98 to Rs. 41,200 crore. You one mentioning Rs. 40,000 crore, but it is Rs. 41,200 crore. I will consider further increase in the budgetary support during the course of the year, if necessary. there can be no compromise in our defence preparedness.

An amount of Rs. 9,000 crore is being earmarked for Food subsidy in 1998-99 representing an increase of Rs. 1,500 crore over RE 1997-98. The provision for sugar subsidy has been retained at Rs. 400 crore. An increase in food subsidy has become necessary due to recent revision of minimum support price for wheat procurement and also to clear arrears pertaining to previous years.

Pursuant to the change in the selling price of urea, the provision for subsidy on indigenous nitrogenous fertilisers is being reduced from Rs. 6,600 crore in RE 1997-98 to Rs. 6,000 crore. The subsidy on decontrolled phosphatic and potassic fertilisers is being increased from Rs. 2,600 crore in RE 1997-98 to Rs. 3,000 crore.

Grants to States is being enhanced in 1998-99 from Rs. 4,114 crore in RE 1997-98 to Rs. 6,314 crore representing an increase of Rs. 2,200 crore. Of this, the increase of Rs. 950 crore is due to assistance to the States for improvement in the pay & allowances of the university and college teachers. The balance of the increase is mainly due to grants under Tenth Finance Commission's award.

The provision for pension is being increased by Rs. 459 crore over RE 1997-98 to Rs. 7,342 crore. This provision takes into account the effect of Government's

decision to raise the age of superannuation from 58 years to 60 years. This will also have an impact on the Small Savings Collections. The provision for loans to States and Union Territories against net small savings collections is being kept at Rs. 14,200 crore against the provision of Rs. 15,732 crore in RE 1997-98.

A provision of Rs. 1,482 crore has been made for nonplan loans to public sector enterprises mainly for payment of salaries and wages to the employees of sick and convalescent PSUs.

Revenue Receipts

I shall now turn to the revenue receipts.

Hon'ble Members are aware that on the basis of a consensus reached in the Third Meeting of the Inter-State Council held on July 17, 1997, the then government had approved in principle to accept the recommendations of the Tenth Finance Commission regarding the alternative scheme of sharing of Centre's tax revenues with the States. I am happy to announce that we have ratified this decision. Accordingly, I propose to shortly introduce a Constitution Amendment Bill to give effect to this alternative scheme subject only to one modification. The modification is that the percentage share of States' share in the gross proceeds of Central taxes may be reviewed by successive Finance Commissions instead of freezing it for fifteen years as suggested by the Tenth Finance Commission. This is being done in the interest of the States

Gross tax revenues at the existing rates of taxation are estimated at Rs. 1,48,506 crore. As Hon'ble Members are aware, we had made a provision of Rs. 7,594 crore in the RE 1997-98 for States' share in the proceeds of the Voluntary Disclosure of Income Scheme, 1997 as the collections were estimated to be Rs. 10,050 crore by March 31, 1998. However, the actual collection is reported to be about Rs. 1,000 crore less. After making adjustment for the excess share paid to the States, I am providing Rs. 39,074 crore as the share of taxes to the States. Thus, the Centre's net tax revenue will be Rs. 1,09,432 crore over RE 1997-98 of Rs. 99,158 crore. Non-tax revenues are estimated to increase from Rs. 39,356 in RE 1997-98 to Rs. 45,137 crore this year. I have taken credit for Rs. 2,800 crore as license fee from the operators of cellular and basic telecom services and Rs. 4,200 crore as net surplus profits of the Reserve Bank of India.

The net revenue receipts for the Centre, including nontax receipts, are expected to increase from Rs. 1,38,514 crore in RE 1997-98 to Rs. 1,54,569 crore in 1998-99.

In the area of capital receipts, market borrowings are placed at Rs. 55,931 crore. Net external assistance is estimated to be Rs. 2,337 crore. I am also taking credit for receipts from disinvestment of equity in public sector enterprises of Rs. 5,000 crore.

I shall come to the fiscal deficit in Part B of my speech.

18.00 hrs.

Part B

Sir, I now turn to my tax proposals.

There has been much talk of a tough budget. I am sorry to be disappointing these prophets of doom. The temptation to raise taxes in the given situation was indeed great. But I recognise that direct tax policy must import stability and confidence both to individuals and corporates. Therefore, any uncertainty in this regard must be ended. Tax rates introduced last year are moderate enough. Mr. Chidambaram I do not propose to introduce any changes in the rate structure either for individual or corporate taxes. I do hope that long-term stability in tax structure would create virtuous circles of increased productivity, voluntary compliance and enhance our tax widening efforts. In fact, I am going to announce a couple of concessions. Considering the difficulties experienced by the tax payers at the marginal level, the level for tax exemption is being raised from the existing limit of Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 50,000.

Salary earners having income upto Rs. 1 lakh will be further pleased to know that I propose to raise the ceiling of standard deduction in their case from Rs. 20,000 to Rs. 25,000. Their pleasure, I hope, will be happily shared by those salary earners whose income is more than Rs. 5 lakhs. They will henceforth not be entitled to this deduction. For salary earners having income between Rs. 1 lakh and Rs. 5 lakhs, no change is proposed in the existing position. It will remain at Rs. 20,000. I also propose to enhance the ceiling of tax-free reimbursement of medical expenses from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 15,000.

In a country of our size, it is a matter of great anxiety that the total number of assesses constitutes less than 1.25% of our population. The scope for tax widening remains the single most formidable challenge in the area of direct taxes. It is well accepted tenet of taxation policy that moderate rates of taxes only make sense if the net is wide and the scope of evasion progressively minimised. Towards this objective, I propose to take some important initiatives. Last year, a scheme was introduced to cover 12 important cities where if you fulfil two of the four criteria, namely, possession of a house, subscription to a telephone, spending on foreign travel and possession of a motor vehicle, you would be obliged to file an income-tax return. This scheme had several lacunae unfortunately, which I propose to remove. In the first instance, the scheme is being extended now to cover 23 more cities in India taking the total coverage to 35 cities. The net itself is being enlarged to include two additional criteria, namely, holding a credit card and membership of expensive clubs, taking the total parameters to six.

Finally, the matching of two out of four parameters apart from being an administratively onerous task provided an escape route to many potential assesseees. I believe that if any one fulfils any one of the six criteria, it would be reasonable to ask the individual to file his income-tax return. It could thereafter be determined whether he is liable for payment of taxes or not. This revised "One-by-Six", as the scheme would now be known, is a significant initiative in our tax widening efforts and it is my intention to raise the total number of individual filing their income-tax returns by at least 50 percent during a full fiscal year.

Coupled with tax widening, tax evasion continues to be a serious handicap. While efforts at enforcement would be strengthened, I propose to undertake a new initiative in making it obligatory for assesseees to quote their PAN or GIR number mandatory in respect of certain high value transactions. Mr. Speaker, Sir, These transactions would be :-

- * Purchase & Sale of immovable property to a value to be defined.
- * Purchase & Sale of motor vehicles
- * Transaction in shares exceeding Rs. 50,000
- * Opening of new bank accounts
- * Fixed deposits of more than Rs. 50,000
- * Applications for allotment of a telephone connection
- * Payment to hotels exceeding Rs. 25,000/-

With increased usage of computerisation, this data will be fully utilised for increasing the tax-base and for preventing the leakage of revenue.

We must recognise that the cumbersome nature of our income tax forms coupled with complex procedures is a serious deterrent to an honest individual in becoming an assessee. I, therefore, propose to introduce, for the first time, a simple one page taxpayer-friendly return form to be hereinafter called, 'SARAL', applicable to all non-corporate taxpayers. SARAL can be filled up easily without the aid of Chartered Accountants or Tax Advisors. The 'SARAL', I hope, would become popular enough, through voluntary compliance and the assistance of NGOs, which I propose to muster, along with mobile vans for important cities, so that the forms are widely distributed and collected easily on the spot. This will, apart from contributing to our tax widening effort, also make an important psychological difference in the mindset of potential tax assesseees.

Litigation has been the bane of both direct and indirect taxes. A lot of energy of the Revenue Department is being frittered in pursuing large number of litigations pending at different levels for long periods of time. Considerable revenue also gets locked up in such disputes. Declogging the system will not only incentivise honest taxpayers, enable government to realise its reasonable dues much earlier but coupled with

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administrative measures, would also make the system more user-friendly. I, therefore, propose to introduce a new scheme called "SAMADHAN". The scheme would apply to both direct taxes and indirect taxes and offer waiver of interest, penalty and immunity from prosecution on payment of arrears of direct tax at the current rates. In respect of indirect tax, where in recent years the adjustment of rates has been very sharp, an abatement of 50 per cent of the duty would be available alongwith waiver of interest, penalty and immunity from prosecution.

Legal measures are also being proposed to limit and expedite litigation. These include enhanced scale of fees for filing appeals before the Appellate Commissioner and the Income tax Appellate Tribunal, Appellate Commissioner and the Income Tax Appellate Tribunal, Abolition of the level of Depute Commissioner (Appeals), provision of direct appeals to High Courts to reduce delay, and also extension of the scope of the Authority for Advance Ruling to notified categories of resident tax payers.

Moderate rates and large concessions do not go hand in hand. I have, therefore, carried out a review of the various concessions and exemptions under the Income-tax Act. I find that many of them are no longer necessary and some of them are also being used for tax avoidance. I, therefore, propose to withdraw many of these provisions. These include exemption to the Export Import Bank of India and exemption in respect of certain perquisites of foreigners employed in India. The blanket exemption in respect of educational and medical institutions which is being misused, is proposed to be withdrawn, compelling such institutions to come under a discipline. However, safeguards are being provided to ensure that the institutions genuinely serving the social cause in either field do not lose the existing benefits.

I also proposes to plug certain loopholes. Rule 5(a) of the First Schedule to the Income-tax Act relating to computation of profit of insurance business other than life insurance business is being amended to prevent leakage of revenue. Similarly, section 10(23G) of that Act is being recast to serve the objective of infrastructure financing without misuse of the concession. Under the existing provisions, there is no mechanism to ensure that the tax free funds raised by an infrastructure enterprise are actually used for infrastructure development within a reasonable time and are not used for any other purpose. I propose to provide such a mechanism.

Gift-tax has been levied in India since 1958. The revenue yield from this tax has been insignificant. Last year we collected barely Rs. 9 crore. The Gift-tax Act has also not been successful as an instrument to curb tax evasion and avoidance. I therefore, propose to

discontinue the levy of gift-tax on gifts made after 30th September, 1998. At the same time, to ensure that there are no leakages of income-tax revenue through the mechanism of gifts, I propose to tax the gifts under the Income-tax Act itself in the hands of the recipients. However, the gifts from nonresidents including NRIs through banking channels will continue to enjoy exemption as at present.

I have already said that housing is an area which requires our utmost attention. Therefore, I propose several incentives to encourage house-building activity. These include :-

- Tax holiday for approved housing projects—100 per cent deduction from profits for first five years and 30 per cent deduction for subsequent five years.
- Increased deductions against income from house property—deduction for repairs and collection charges increased from 1/5th to 1/4th and deduction for interest on borrowed capital in case of self-occupied property increased from Rs. 15,000 to Rs. 30,000.
- Carry-forward of losses from house property against future income under the same head to be allowed for 8 years.
- Deduction equal to 50 per cent of the profits to companies engaged in housing projects aided by the World Bank.
- Section 80GG in respect of deduction for rents paid is being reintroduced.
- Exemptions to certain specified properties like commercial complexes under the Wealth-tax Act.

Other areas in the social sector for which new tax incentives are proposed or the existing ones are being increased include employment generation, improvement of environment, upliftment of women, road safety, cooperatives and medical expenses for the handicapped.

I propose to allow a new deduction to companies with a view to encourage them to employ additional work force. An amount equal to 30 per cent of additional wages paid to the new workmen will be allowed as a deduction against profits, subject to certain conditions.

For improvement of environment, I propose to allow 100 percent deduction, subject to a ceiling of Rs. 5 lakhs, to undertakings engaged in the collection or processing of biodegradable waste. I also propose to make activities which encourage the production of bacteria induced fertilisers eligible for 100 per cent deduction under section 35AC of the Income-tax Act. Necessary amendment in the rules will be notified for this purpose. Similar benefit is proposed to be extended to the activities of establishing and running of educational institutions, hospitals and medical facilities

in rural areas exclusively for women and children and also creches and schools for the children of workers employed in factories or at project sites. I also propose similar amendment of rules to make activities which promote road safety and traffic awareness to prevent accidents eligible for 100 per cent deduction under section 35AC.

The promotion of sports and games in the country needs to be encouraged. I propose setting up of National Sports Fund and further propose that donations made to the Fund will be eligible for 100 per cent deduction.

I propose to extend 100% tax holiday granted to industrial undertakings located in any industrially backward State of district till the year 2000. I also propose similar extension of tax holiday to power sector upto the year 2003 and also to new refineries set up after 1st October, 1998. I also propose to extend infrastructure status to inland waterways and inland ports.

I further propose tax holiday benefits to radio paging services and services provided by satellite owners for telecommunication.

I also propose several measures in response to demands from business and industry. Certain categories of business reorganisation are proposed to be freed from any additional tax liability or loss of tax benefits keeping in view the necessity of such reorganisation consequent on economic liberalisation. No capital gain would be charged and the benefit of carry-forward of losses and unabsorbed depreciation would be allowed in case of specified reorganisations. Intangible assets are proposed to be allowed depreciation at the rate of 25 per cent. Provisions for amortisation of preliminary expenses are proposed to be liberalised. The period of amortisation is proposed to be reduced from 10 years to 5 years and the rate of deduction will consequently be doubled. Stock lending is proposed to be exempted from capital gains.

Delay in refund of excess tax collected tantamounts to denial of justice. It is source of constant harassment, particularly of small tax payers. I intend to mitigate this difficulty by effecting an amendment in section 192 of the Income-tax Act which will enable adjustment of loss from house property against salary income, at the source itself. This, I believe, will eliminate a large number of refund claims.

In response to demands from tax payers, I propose to take further measures. Under the existing provisions of section 44AA of the Income-tax Act, every person carrying on business or profession is required to maintain account books, if his income from business exceeds Rs. 40,000 or his total turnover exceeds Rs. 5 lakhs. Considering the increased cost of engaging accountants, I propose to enhance these limits to Rs. 1,20,000 and Rs. 10 lakhs respectively. I further propose

that the penalty leviable at the minimum rate of Rs. 100 per day for failure to furnish certificates of tax deduction or collection at source under section 203 or to deliver copies of declarations under section 197A, shall not exceed the amount of tax deductible or collectible, as the case may be. Presently, there is no such ceiling on the quantum of penalty leviable which causes hardship, particularly to small businessmen.

Certain demands of the film industry have also engaged my attention and I propose to give relief to them. The government has already announced that film industry will be treated as an industry. Under the existing rules, if a film is released on commercial basis at least 180 days before the end of the previous year, full amortisation of the cost incurred on production or acquisition of distribution rights of the film is allowed in the year of release itself whereas if the film is released later, full amortisation is not allowed in that year. Considering that nowadays film producers and distributors release a large number of prints simultaneously to counter the threat of video-piracy, and cable television, resulting in shorter life span for exploitation of films, I propose to reduce the aforesaid period of 180 days to 90 days. This will enable the film industry to quickly recoup the cost of film production and distribution. I also propose that producers of films, who are required to furnish information in respect of all payments over Rs. 5,000 to the Income-tax Department in any financial year would have to do so now only in respect of payments of Rs. 25,000. I hope these measures would inspire the film industry to make better and healthier films.

A controversy has arisen recently regarding the deductibility of payments by way of extortion money. To set the controversy at rest, I propose to explicitly provide retrospectively since the inception of Income-tax Act, 1961 that any money paid by way of extortion will not, I repeats, will not qualify for deduction as a business expense. As further rationalisation measure, I propose to make certain amendments with regard to block assessment procedure and treatment of MODVAT credit in the valuation of inventories and capital assets.

The limit of room rent in hotels for the purpose of attracting expenditure tax is proposed to be increased from Rs. 1200 to Rs. 2000 per day.

Taxpayers all over the world have a sense of pride in discharging their legitimate dues to the government and the society recognises the important contribution they are making in enabling the State to discharge its responsibilities. In this country, regrettably, the culture of pride by honest taxpayer and a social recognition of his important role has yet to evolve. We must make a change in this mindset. Towards this objective, I propose to introduce a scheme called "SAMMAN" to demonstrate the society's recognition of their important contribution to the national cause. The details of the facilities and

[Shri Yashwant Sinha]

recognition to be conferred on the taxpayers and PAN holders would be separately announced.

I hope the above measures alongwith SARAL, SAMMAN and SAMADHAN will go a long way in making our efforts to increase the tax payers compliance a success. But while we are doing what we can, I call upon the people of India to do their patriotic duty by the country and honestly pay their taxes.

Before I move on to indirect tax, I would like to state that a large number of suggestions were received from all sections of tax payers and I have got them carefully examined. It is not practicable to acknowledge all these communications individually. I do so now collectively and am extremely thankful to the tax payers for their valuable suggestions.

Hon'ble Members would see from the budget documents that the figure projected by way of revenue realisation from direct taxes is Rs. 48,855 crore which is higher than the figure indicated in the interim budget. This is after taking into account the revenue loss of Rs. 950 crore, worked out on a mechanical basis, arising out of certain proposals for reliefs and concessions placed before this House. We intend to make this loss up and collect the budgeted amount through improved collection of arrears, continuation of the tax base enlargement offers, rigorous enforcement and tightening measures reflected in the budget proposals.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, our medium-term objective is to enhance the tax-GDP ratio. As far as customs duties are concerned the process of restructuring has resulted in a progressive reduction in tariffs, with a view to align these with internationally accepted levels, and the broadcasting of rates. These measures have enhanced the competitiveness of Indian industry.

On the excise side, until a few years ago the regime was characterised by a multiplicity of rates and punctuated with numerous ad hoc exemptions. As a result, the tax structure was opaque. It is the objective of the present proposals to introduce greater transparency in the system through a significant rationalisation of rates. The ultimate objective of this process is to move towards a Central Value-Added Tax (VAT) system which can then be merged with a generalised VAT. It is our intention to move in this broad direction.

The domestic industry has responded favourable to the restructuring of customs duties and has shown commendable resilience. They need to improve their competitive efficiency to meet the challenges of global competition. But they also have legitimate concerns which cannot be ignored. In this background, the path of transition has to be carefully calibrated to ensure that the adjustment process for the Indian industry is orderly without leading to serious disruption.

I have received representations from a cross section of the industry about the regime of import duties. Many Hon. Members have also written to me expressing their concern at the general health of the domestic industry. The demands are diverse and asymmetrical in most cases. This is for obvious reasons. While the users of imported raw materials and other inputs or the consumers of finished imported goods would benefit from further reduction in import duties, the domestic producers have made a convincing case for urgent relief to the domestic industry.

I have given my earnest consideration to these concerns and the competing claims. I am persuaded about a clear disability that our commodity taxation inflicts on the indigenous goods vis-a-vis the imported goods. While the former are subjected to sales tax and other local taxes and levies, the import sector escapes them by their very nature. In order to provide a level playing-field to the domestic industry, I propose to impose an additional nonmodvatable levy of 8% on imports which is approximately equal to the burden of local taxes on domestic producers. This duty should not be viewed as a protectionist measure but only as a response to a legitimate demand for a level playing field. The new levy would not apply to crude oil, newsprint, capital goods sector under a special tariff regime or goods which are subjected to additional duties of excise in lieu of sales tax, gold and silver imported by passengers or other nominated agencies and life saving drugs that are free from customs duties. The levy would also not apply to goods which are currently exempt both from basic and additional duties of customs. Similarly, goods imported for subsequent trading have also been left out of its purview, since they bear the burden of Sales tax at the time of first sale. The new levy will also not apply to inputs imported under export-promotion schemes. In addition, there may be other sectors eligible for exemptions. These would be examined and if considered appropriate notified separately.

The gradual reduction of import duties in the past few years has resulted in certain distortions and anomalies. My proposals seek to correct them as far as found feasible without causing abrupt disruption in the duty structure.

The steel industry has shown considerable resilience in the past to withstand gradual reduction in customs duties. Last year, however, the steel industry has not shown any appreciable growth. I propose to increase the customs duty on cold rolled coils of iron and steel from 25% to 30%. I also propose to reduce the duty on stainless steel melting scrap from 10% to 5% and on refractory ceramic goods from 40% to 30%. I am confident that these changes alongwith the imposition of the special additional duty that I have proposed on the imports in general would provide adequate relief to the steel industry.

The duty on wrought copper is being raised from 30% to 35%.

I do not intend to make any other changes in the duty structure applicable to ferrous and nonferrous metals.

Textile intermediates like DMT, PTA, MEG attract customs duty at 25%. However, caprolactum which is the raw material for making nylon yarn is subjected to a higher duty of 30%. I am reducing the duty on caprolactum also to the level of 25% so that all the major textile intermediates attract the same rate of duty. The import duty on paraxylene, an important input for synthetic fibres and yarn, is being reduced from a total of 15% to 5%.

The decentralised sector of the textile industry generates avenues for employment. It deserves to be encouraged by reducing cost. I propose to reduce customs duty on apparel grade raw wool from a total of 25% to 20%. The duty on wool waste and guaranteed stock of wool is also being reduced by the same extent. I also propose to reduce the duty on acetate and cuprammonium filament yarn from 30% to 20%. In the same vein, machinery required for viscose filament yarn and woollen industry is being accorded the concessional duty of 10%.

The import of paper and paper board has shown phenomenal growth in terms of quantity. In order to improve the competitiveness of the domestic producers, I propose to increase the customs duty on paper and paper board from 20% to 30%.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, my government values the right to information. With a view to further strengthen this right, I propose to reduce customs duty on a standard newsprint from 10% to 5%. I also propose to rationalise the duty structure by subjecting glazed newsprint to the same rate of duty. Furthermore, I also intend to exempt newsprint from the applicability of 8% across the board special additional duty.

I also propose to reduce the duty on light weight coated paper weighing upto 51 grams per square metre for printing of magazines to a total of 5%.

The customs duty on photographic chemicals is being raised from 25% to 30%. Similarly, the duty on citric acid is being increased from 30% to 40%.

I propose to reduce the customs duty on jumbo rolls of cinematographic film from 25% to 10%.

Motor vehicle parts are generally subjected to customs duty at 40%. However, I.C. engines and parts thereof for motor vehicles attract a lower rate of duty of 20%. I propose to raise the customs duty thereon to 30%.

I propose to reduce the duty on industrial diamonds from 30% to 20%. This would help the diamond cutting tool industry.

As a measure of rationalisation, I propose to reduce the duty on rayon-grade wood pulp from 10% to 5%.

Thalassaemia is a life-threatening blood-disorder. There have been requests for exempting maltol, an input used in the manufacture of drugs for the treatment of this disorder. I propose to fully exempt maltol from customs duty. Hydroxy ethyl starch and dextrin are used in the manufacture of artificial plasma which is free from import duty. I propose to reduce the burden of duty on artificial plasma by reducing the duty on hydroxy ethyl starch and dextrans from 30% to 5%. I also propose to exempt Lamivudine, which is used for the treatment of AIDS, from customs duty.

Leather industry contributes significantly to our export effort. In order to encourage its export, I propose to reduce the duty on specified machinery for leather industry from 20% to 5%. This would also be the rate applicable to leather splitting machinery. I also propose to reduce the duty on saddle trees from 30% to 10%.

Sir, the House is aware that India has joined the Information Technology Agreement. We are committed to abolish the import duty on products of information technology. This is not because we are bound by the ITA but because we are convinced that spread of information technology and freer exchange of information is the key to success and human welfare. I propose to reduce the duty on floppy disk drives, hard disk drives and CD-ROM drives from a total of 12% to 5%. The duty on ICs of value exceeding one thousand rupees per piece is also being reduced to 5%. I also propose to reduce the duty on computer parts excluding PPCB from a total of 15% to 12%. The duty on PPCB is being reduced from a total of 25% to 22%. I also propose to reduce the duty on cathode ray tubes for colour monitors for computers from a total of 15% to 5% and on deflection components for colour monitors for computers from a total of 25% to 5%. My proposals also include reduction in duty on telecom software from 40% to 30%. Such software henceforth will not be subject to any additional duty of customs.

In order to encourage the domestic telecom equipment sector, I propose to reduce the duty on parts of such equipment to 20%.

As a measure of environmental protection, I propose to reduce the import duty on sawn wood and certain other varieties of wood from 30% to 25%. I also propose to reduce the duty on biopesticides, which are eco-friendly, from 30% to 5%. With the same objective, I have proposed reduction of duty on membrane electrolyzers and parts from 25% to 10%.

The duty on spodumene, which is an energy saving material, is being reduced from 25% to 10%. On silicon, which is widely used in solar energy applications, I propose to reduce the duty to half of the existing 10%.

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I propose to reduce the duty on -

- Solar cells and modules from 30% to 20%
- Button cells from 20% to 10%
- Watch movements from 25% to 20%
- DC micro motors from 40% to 20%
- CD mechanism from 40% to 30%

Mr. Speaker Sir, good roads are a necessity for social and economic development. I am sure that those of us who are privileged to afford personalised vehicles can afford to contribute to the faster development of good roads in the country. I propose to charge an additional tax at the rate of rupee one per litre on petrol with immediate effect. This is expected to generate an amount of Rs. 790 crore in a year which will be used for the development of roads and entirely go towards augmenting the corpus of the National Highways Authority of India. I propose to extend the concessions presently available to import of equipment for construction of National Highways to other road-construction projects also.

The importers of precious yellow metal can certainly afford to contribute a bit more to the national exchequer. I propose to increase the import duty on gold from 220 rupees per ten grams to 250 rupees per ten grams.

The duty free allowance for baggage is Rs. 6000 at present. Many countries do not impose any such restrictions. While we may not follow them there is need to increase the present limit to reduce delays in clearance of passengers. I propose to increase the baggage allowance from Rs. 6000 to Rs. 12000 per passenger returning to India after a stay exceeding three days. I also propose to extend free allowance of Rs. 3000 to Indian residents returning from Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar or China by air, after a stay exceeding three days.

There are a number of items on which it is necessary to reduce the customs duties marginally on account of GATT binding. I do not wish to take the time of the House in going into the details.

The government is committed to provide a tax code which is consistent with dismantling of administered pricing mechanism of petroleum products in a phased manner. By the year 2001, the import duty on crude has to be reduced from the current level of 27% to not more than 5%. The import duty on down stream products like furnace oil, LSHS, HSD oil, motor spirit and ATF has also to be reduced to the level of 10% to 15%. In this process, we will ensure an effective protection not exceeding 20% for downstream industry by suitable differential and calibration of import duty structure.

I have initiated the process of implementing the decisions arising from the dismantling of administered

pricing mechanism. I propose to reduce the customs duty on crude from a total of 27% to 22%. This is estimated to result in a revenue loss of Rs. 965 crore in a year. In order to recoup the loss, I propose to increase the excise duty on motor spirit from 20% to 35%. I also propose to impose customs duty on kerosene imported for parallel marketing at 32% including a special duty of 2%.

I now come to my proposals on central excise.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the contribution of the small scale sector in the economy cannot be over emphasised. It is a critical fast track for generating employment thus promising support to thousands of families. The predecessor governments have been sympathetic to the small scale sector but I am afraid they have not done enough to encourage them so as to exploit their full potential. The fiscal incentives provided to the small scale sector have been rather meagre for a number of years.

I have taken certain important steps in this direction. I propose to raise the exemption limit for excise purpose from the present Rs. 30 lakhs to Rs. 50 lakhs, an increase of about 65%. The clearances between Rs. 50 lakhs to Rs. 100 lakhs shall be charged at a flat nominal rate of 5%. These proposals would result in a revenue loss of Rs. 300 crore in a year. This is a small price to pay to restore to health this vital sector of our economy.

Over the years the scheme of Modvat credit has been considerably liberalised. However, the amount of Modvat credit availed has grown unexpectedly fast in recent years, suggesting misuse of the Modvat credit scheme in the absence of a comprehensive computer net work for cross checking modvatable invoices from a far flung ranges. Until such a computer network becomes functional, and as a transitional measures, I propose to restrict the availability of Modvat credit by 5% to the duty paid in the case of inputs used in the manufacture of excisable goods. However, no restriction is placed on the Modvat credit in respect of capital goods.

My proposals regarding other changes in excise duty are guided by the overall need to rationalised the rate-structure so as to reduce the multiplicity of rates and ensure convergence towards a mean rate of 18% ad valorem. An ideal tax structure would be one where, barring the mean rate, there is one lower rate for items deserving concession and a higher rate for what may be described as demerit goods. This would minimise the oscillations in rates and call for compression of intermediate rates.

As a first step towards a convergence to the mean rate, I propose to impose excise duty of 8% on certain commodities. These include :

- Packaged tea
- Branded butter, cheese and ghee

- * Sewing machines, other than hand operated
- * Branded spices
- * Branded edible preparations when produced in factories
- * Preparations of meat and fish sold under a brand name
- * Skimmed milk powder other than for infant feeding
- * Tractors not exceeding 1800 cc
- * Spectacle lenses and frames
- * Slide fasteners

I also propose to charge excise duty on exempted articles of plastics at a flat rate of 5% on clearances in excess of Rs. 1 crore in a financial year.

In the same spirit, I propose to increase the excise duty on medical instruments and appliances as also on pollution control equipment from 5% to 8%.

A good number of commodities are subject to excise duty at 8%. Some of them can bear a higher duty. I, therefore propose to increase the excise duty on these commodities to 13%.

As a result, malt, certain types of cartons, medical furniture, sun glasses and unrecorded video cassettes will henceforth be subjected to duty at 13%.

As a measure of rationalisation, I propose to increase the duty on arms and ammunition from 18% to 25%. I, however, assure the House that arms and ammunition for the military services will continue to be exempt from excise duty.

I propose to raise the duty on multi-utility vehicles from 25% to 30% and on solid or cushion tyres also from 25% to 30%.

I also propose to raise the duty on marble tiles from Rs. 30 to Rs. 40 per square metre.

My proposals also include reduction of excise duty on :

- * Effluent treatment plants from 13% to 8%
- * Diesel engine sets upto 10 HP from 13% to 8%
- * Surgical and medical examination gloves from 18% to 8%
- * Potassium iodate from 18% to 8%
- * Electronic calculators from 18% to 8%
- * Pagers from 18% to 13%
- * Cellophane from 25% to 18%
- * PVC compound from 25% to 18%.

I propose to exempt 100% wood-free particle boards and fibre boards made from agro-based residues from excise duty. Henceforth, cement bonded particle board,

jute particle board, rice husk board, glass fibre reinforced gypsum board, sisal fibre board and bagasse board will also be free from excise duty. I also propose to exempt blocks and bricks containing more than 25% fly ash, ready mixed concrete, jute blankets and jute felt from excise duty. Henceforth, pultruded jute articles shall also be free from excise duty. I hope this will please, my friends from West Bengal and Bihar.

I propose to exempt recorded audio cassettes from excise duty. I also propose to exempt recorded video cassettes intended for television broadcasting from excise duty. The exemption for computer software will now be broad-banded to cover all software.

The domestic nylon industry is stagnating for various reasons. I propose to reduce the duty on nylon filament yarn from 30% to 25%.

Finance Ministers are often criticised by the tax payers for their compulsive habit to increase the burden of taxes. However, such complaint cannot be justified by compulsive smokers. I propose to increase the excise duty on cigarettes by varying degrees ranging from 6% to 11% of the specific rates.

I have no intention of being harsh on smokers all the way. Accordingly, I propose to reduce excise duty on matches manufactured in the cottage sector by half from Rs. 0.50 to Rs. 0.25 per hundred boxes. A smaller reduction is also being made in respect of matches manufactured by other sectors.

High rates of duties are known to induce evasion and avoidance. I propose to reduce the excise duty on alcohol-based toilet preparations from 100% to 50%. I expect that this will improve compliance and States will get more revenue.

The Maximum Retail Price (MRP) based excise levy introduced last year in respect of certain products has been welcomed by the industry. This scheme provides for simplification and certainty in taxation. I propose to extend this scheme to a few more commodities, such as chocolates, malted food preparations, glazed tiles, razor blades, radio sets, domestic electrical appliances and pan masala.

In the last budget, a number of services were added in the tax net. These included the service rendered on transportation of goods by road. The House is aware that it led to wide spread resistance and protests. As a result, this service tax was virtually kept in abeyance and rightly so. I have decided to abolish the service tax on transportation of goods by road. I have also decided to abolish the service tax payable by outdoor caterers and pandal contractors. However, I have proposed service tax on some new services. These are services provided by :

- * Architects
- * Interior decorators

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- Management consultants.
- Chartered Accountants.
- Cost Accountants.
- Company Secretaries
- Private security services
- Real estate agents and real estate consultants
- Market research agencies
- Credit Rating Agencies
- Underwriting agencies
- Slaughter houses using mechanised means for large animals.

We will examine how in respect of certain segments liable to Service Tax, the manner and mode of payment could be further simplified to improve compliance. These new service taxes will yield Rs. 220 crore in a full year.

My proposals relating to customs duties are estimated to result in a net gain of Rs. 3,304 crore in one year. In case of excise duties, my proposals are estimated to result in a gain of Rs. 5,009 crore.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, there can be no two opinions that we must increase the level of voluntary compliance and our tax procedures should be simple, transparent and hassle free. Our tax laws are yet to achieve this objective even though considerable efforts have been made in the past.

Our laws are not in tune with the need of the times. It is imperative that they should be rebuilt on a comprehensive basis and modified to make them truly modern. I am conscious that it is not an easy task. But it is not impossible. I have decided to set up an Expert Group to recast the central excise law. It will be my Government's endeavour to bring a new excise law before Parliament in the next budget session.

The government have also decided to set up a Settlement Commission for settlement of certain categories of disputes relating to customs and excise duties. The details of the scheme are contained in the Finance Bill. I also propose to set up an authority for Advance Tax Rulings for Excise and Customs in view of the need for foreign investors to be assured in advance of their likely indirect tax liability. A bill to this effect will be introduced in Parliament in due course.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, with our courage, determination and conviction, we freed ourselves from the British Raj more than fifty years ago. This year the nation takes pride in celebrating the 50th year of independence. Our trade and industry, however, is still not free from another Raj, namely, the Inspector Raj. We are committed to put an end to this in the shortest possible time. I am of the view that we owe it to our taxpayers to provide a

competent, efficient, sensitive and responsive tax administration. Indeed, it is long overdue.

There is a widespread feeling that the operation and implementation of excise laws leads to harassment of the assessee. We are earnestly desirous of bringing about systemic changes to remedy the situation. Some of the more important measures that are proposed, are :

- Minimising the contact points between the officials and assessee
- Reducing areas which require permission or approval
- Providing respectability to orders passed by Commissioner (Appeals) and the Tribunal
- Simplifying the procedure for second appeal in Modvat cases
- Restricting factory visits by the staff

I am conscious of the fact that there is a strong resentment against the procedures and legal obligations relating to service tax. I have removed a number of obnoxious and deterrent provisions in law. I also propose to abolish several of the redundant and irritating central excise rules very shortly.

On the customs side, I have decided to strengthen the initiatives already taken in the form of Fast Track Clearance Systems and the Self-Assessment System in import clearance. Computerisation in both Customs and Central Excise departments will be completed expeditiously so that information can be obtained from the assessee and the importers and exporters through electronic media thereby reducing contact between the assessee and the department.

I am introducing a new culture of time-bound action by officials of the Customs and Central Excise department. A Citizens' Charter is being released shortly to lay down the citizen's rights and the obligations cast on the customs and excise officials.

Copies of notifications giving effect to the above changes in customs and excise duties will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

Finally, I have something to say on behalf of my Hon'ble colleague, the Minister of Communications. Postal service is highly employment-intensive and salary and allowances constitute a major part of the operating expenses of the postal department. A revision of tariff for postal services has become unavoidable. However, in the interest of the common man and the role of the print media in a democracy, there will be no change in the tariff for postcard and registered newspapers. However, the rate of competition postcard is being revised from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3, inland letter from Rs. 1 to Rs. 1.50, letter from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 for every 20 gms. or part thereof and parcels from Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 for every 500 gms. or part thereof. There are also certain other

changes which are explained in the Memorandum circulated alongwith the budget documents. The changes would take effect from a date to be notified after the Finance Bill is passed. The revisions proposed are estimated to yield an additional revenue of about Rs. 270 crore in a full year and about Rs. 180 crore in 1998-99. Even this modest increase, which is necessary for sustaining postal department will only partially meet the cost of postal services leaving an uncovered postal deficit of about Rs. 695 crore.

As a result of my tax proposals and the postal tariff revision, total expenditure of the Central government for the year 1998-99 would be marginally reduced to Rs. 2,67,927 crore while the net revenue receipts and non-debt capital receipts would increase to Rs. 1,76,902 crore. The revenue deficit is placed at Rs. 48,068 crore which is 3% of GDP. The fiscal deficit is placed at Rs. 91,025 crore which is 5.6% of GDP. With the present state of the economy and in view of the need for expenditure stimulus to growth, I believe further compression is not warranted this year.

Sir, it is my firm conviction that in the days to come India will stand tall on the world's stage because of our commitment to democracy and the pursuit of prosperity. I call upon hon. Members to join us to strengthen freedom and opportunity, I call upon hon. Members to join us to build a better future for every man, woman and child. As we move together and with discipline, the future is ours. In the words of Ramdhari Singh Dinkar

Senani Karo Prayan abhaya
Bhavi itihās tumhara hai,
Ye nakhat ama ke bujhte hain
sara akash tumhara hai.
Rise O' warrior march ahead undaunted
You are the Creator of future history

The stars of the dark night are fading
The whole sky belongs to you.

Mr. Speaker, Sir with these words, I commend the budget to this august House.

18.57 hrs.

FINANCE (NO. 2) BILL, 1998*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government for the financial year 1998-99.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to give effect to the financial proposals of the Central Government for the financial year 1998-99."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA : I introduce** the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : The Finance Bill has been introduced.

The House stands adjourned to reassemble at 11.00 a.m. on Tuesday, the 2nd June, 1998.

18.58 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Tuesday, June 2, 1998/
Jyaistha 12, 1920 (Saka).*

* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section-2, dated 1.6.98

** Introduced with the recommendation of the President.