

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Twelfth Session
(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)



सत्यमेव जयते

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Wednesday, March 5, 2003/Phalgun 14, 1924 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

[English]

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Sir, I have given notice on the issue of disinvestment of profit-making undertakings, namely, HPCL and BPCL. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Sir, I have given notice for suspension of the Question Hour. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Dasmunsi, you have given notice for the suspension of the Question Hour. The same issue was discussed yesterday also. I would request you not to insist upon your notice and let me go ahead with the other business.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Prime Minister is here. The Government functions on the basis of collective responsibility. After the presentation of the Budget, two distinguished Ministers of the Government—the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of Food—came out publicly questioning the Budget in terms of increasing the prices of fertilisers and diesel. This does not reflect a healthy picture of the Government. We are concerned about the fate of the farmers and we demand that the hike in fertiliser prices should be withdrawn immediately as it is also the voice of several NDA Allies, if they are sincere to their cause till today....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.): Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Prime Minister is present in the House. The Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. Ms. Mayawatiji has alleged that the Members of Parliament have misappropriated crores of rupees from MPLAD scheme, ...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker Sir, ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have received notices only from two Members of the House. One is from Shri Ramji Lal Suman and the other from Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi. Shri Dasmunsi has already made his observation.

As regards Shri Ramji Lal Suman, why the Question Hour should be suspended, only to this limit, he can speak.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJILAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a very serious issue. We have been regularly demanding in the House for the last two-three days that the price hike of fertilizers and diesel effected by the Finance Minister should be rolled back. The ally parties of the Government held the same view that the Government should change its decision which puts burden on the farmers. In the meeting of B.J.P. Parliamentary Party held yesterday it was urged by Members of the B.J.P. that the prices of diesel and fertilizers should be reduced. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Sumanji, how can you raise a matter which was discussed in B.J.P. Parliamentary Party meeting? Please speak as to why the Question Hour should be suspended?

SHRI RAMJILAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the farmers have already suffered a lot and the increase in the prices of fertilizers and diesel will enhance their suffering? To increase the prices of fertilizers and diesel is not proper from any point of view. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, our question is more important than any other question. The Government is keeping quiet. How can they keep quiet? ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. I will give you chance in the 'Zero Hour'.

[Translation]

Please sit down. Nothing more can be done. I will give you chance in the 'Zero Hour'. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Question Hour can be suspended provided the whole house agrees. If the entire House does not agree, I cannot suspend the Question Hour. Your question will be taken up during 'Zero Hour'.

Now Q. 201—Dr. Ashok Patel.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, when the Minister of Home Affairs will make his statement?
...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Akhilesh, you are aware

[Translation]

You had raised the issue.

[English]

The Government is going to reply to that. The Government would make a statement on this issue.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: When the Government will make a statement?

MR. SPEAKER: I can ask the Government about it, but first take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. I have taken a decision on your question. I am going to permit you during Zero Hour ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Let me ask the Government when they are going to reply.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. I am enquiring from him. Will you not allow me to enquire from him?

How can the House function in this way? Suman ji, I have replied to your query, so please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I had permitted you to raise the issue during Zero Hour because it was an important one. I have not received any notice regarding the issue raised by Akhileshji. You know that this issue was raised yesterday and I had told that the Government would make a statement. Now, I enquire from the Government about the time when they are going to make a statement.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: We want to know the time when the Government is going to make a statement.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, would you like to say when the statement can be made, at what time? They want to know when you are going to make a statement.

[Translation]

Will you make it during Zero Hour.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Is it regarding Ms. Mayawati?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we will make it after question hour.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: After the Question Hour.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. No more interruptions.

I have disallowed the Adjournment Motions. Shri Rupchand Pal's Adjournment Motion is on disinvestments

of HPCL and BPCL. The Parliamentary Affairs Minister wanted to make a statement on disinvestments of BCL and HPCL. Shrimati Sushma Swaraj, would you like to say something?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: It will be made after question hour, please let the question hour continue.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: During the 'Zero Hour' she will make a statement.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Now Question No. 201—Dr. Ashok Patel.

11.07 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[Translation]

Medicinal Plants along National Highways

*201. DR. ASHOK PATEL:
SHRI PADAM SEN CHOUDHRY:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated a scheme to plant medicinal plants along the National Highways;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the progress of work is very slow under the scheme; and

(d) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken for the expeditious implementation of the scheme?

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) to (d) Presently, there is no scheme to plant medicinal plants along the National Highways. However, a Committee has been formed to

examine the feasibility and possibility of plantation of medicinal plants along the National Highways.

[Translation]

DR. ASHOK PATEL: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has mentioned in his reply that at present there is no such scheme and a committee has been constituted in this regard. I want to ask the hon. Minister the number and names of the Members of that committee, the tenure of the Committee and the time by which the Committee is likely to present its report?

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member has asked about the scheme to plant medicinal plants along the National Highways. Last year in the month of May the Ministry of Health had sent a letter to the Prime Minister in this regard. Further action has been taken on his direction and the first meeting was held on 30th October. A core group has been constituted on 22nd February and the names of the members of core group are as follows:

[English]

1. Shri Rawat, (Chairman), Chief Executive Officer, National Medicinal Plants Board, Ministry of Health.
2. Shrimati Kar, (Member), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.
3. Shri Kingra, (Member), Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports.
4. Dr. Maiti, (Member), Ministry of Agriculture.
5. Shri Ranjan, (Member), Ministry of Environment and Forests
6. Shri Sethi, (Member), Ministry of Road Transport and Highways.
7. Shri V.K. Sharma, (Member-Secretary), General Manager and Member of IFS, National Highway Authority of India.

[Translation]

It was constituted on 22nd February and direction issued to make an Action Plan under which the plantation of these plants should be done along those Highways. I hope that these action-plans will be ready within three to four months and further action will be taken after that.

DR. ASHOK PATEL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, whether any survey has been conducted by National Highway Authority of India in this regard, if so, the details thereof and

whether there is any proposal for launching similar schemes by other Ministries, also, if so, the names of those schemes?

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, so far as National Highway Authority of India is concerned first time in 1976, the Ministry had declared a policy on types of trees and number of trees to be planted along the national highways. After formulating the policy, it has been amended from time to time as per requirement. After 1976 we made some amendments in the policy in 1979 and again in 1996 and recently one more amendment has been made in this policy in 1999 in which a decision has been taken regarding the types of trees to be planted and distance to be earmarked while planting trees. Although medicinal plants were also included in this policy but no special attention was paid on arranging such plants in case only medicinal plants are planted along the highways. This work has been started recently.

So far as seeking information on the subject by other organisations or the Ministries is concerned, I want to make it clear that planting trees along National Highways is the responsibility of my Ministry. So on the basis of information in this regard other Ministries can contribute whatever they can but this is our job and we are doing it. We have a plan for planting trees.

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Minister, by saying that there is no such plan, has made the question pointless. But I would like to submit that your Ministry has a wide jurisdiction. Hon'ble Prime Minister is also sitting here. I and hon'ble Prime Minister had gone to Rewa region in Madhya Pradesh where he had said in his speech that one need not do exercise after walking on the roads in Rewa. I would like to submit that a case is pending with regard to constructing a by-pass in my Rewa constituency for the last 13 years. You invited proposal for constructing it on BOT basis. This proposal has not been sent to you by the Government of Madhya Pradesh. National Highway No. 7 passes through a very busy road, on which schools are located. Many have lost their lives in the accidents taking place frequently on this busy road. The matter of construction of by-pass has been pending for the last 13 years. It is to be constructed on BOT basis. Either Government should release funds or construct it on BOT basis as in this case no funds are required from the Government. Therefore immediate action should be taken in this regard. I would like to ask as to when the proposal sent by the Government of Madhya Pradesh for construction of Rewa by-pass on BOT basis is likely to be cleared and its construction is likely to be completed.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, the question raised is regarding medicinal plants. Hon'ble Members has made two points. First he said that I made his question pointless by saying that there is no plan. My submission is that since the question was about medicinal plants. I said that there is no plan at present but that does not mean to conclude a question. he talked about by-pass, I would like to tell one more thing to him that had it been a heart by-pass, it could have some relations with medicinal plants. But this by-pass has no relation with medicinal plants.

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI: Prime Minister is sitting here so I raised this point. I want to know just one thing from him, the situation is alarming there and Prime Minister had given assurance at that time so I request a reply from him in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER: He will give his reply only when you ask some other question.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I invite hon'ble Member for tea. If he takes a cup of tea with me I will give him reply in my office.

SHRI ANANT GUDHE: Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, as Minister has stated in his reply that a Committee has been constituted to plant medicinal plants on both sides of highways. Even today if we pass through National Highways we find a number of mango trees and many medicinal plants. Mango trees alongside the highways bear plenty of fruits but these are stolen many a time. Yesterday hon'ble Prime Minister made his statement on unemployment. At present big trees are on both sides of the National Highways and you want to grow medicinal plants there as per your future plan. I would like to know whether these plants on both sides of highways can be handed over to unemployed youth in the village for their maintenance and processing their production.
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Gudheji you ask your question please. Now and then I should make others learn how the question are raised. You have asked a very long question. Ask questions to the point so that it may be replied by the Minister in short and questions may also carry some value.

SHRI ANANT GUDHE: They can get better employment from it. What the committee is doing which has been constituted by the Government. Whether it is considering to hand over the job of looking after these plants to the unemployed youth after their plantation so that they can get the production thereof?

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: It is a part of the action-plan and whatever arrangement may be made for planting these plants and also for proper exploitation thereof, it is natural that the cooperation of the public will be there and people will get employment out of that.

[English]

DR. C. KRISHNAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, as we are talking about National Highway Roads and the plantations on the sides of the roads, I want to rise a question about the stones that are laid along the roads indicating the miles or the kilometres. In Tamil Nadu, so far the stones were not being written in Hindi. They were being written only in Tamil and English. Nowadays, the stones have been replaced.

MR. SPEAKER: That is not the question before us. The question before us is whether medicinal plants are to be planted or not. Please sit down. Shri E. Ponnuswamy.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It may be serious, but you can ask this some other time and not now.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, please give Tamil Nadu a chance. Only Bihar and Orissa get the chance. It is a serious matter, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ponnuswamy is from Tamil Nadu.

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY: Thank you Sir. I congratulate the hon. Minister for doing a very good work and laying the roads on the National Highways. Sir, in his reply, he has told that a Committee has been appointed for studying the feasibility or possibility of planting medicinal trees on both sides of the Highways. In Tamil Nadu, a popular tree is the *Neem* tree. Every part of that tree is of quite medicinal value and also quite useful for the people right from the village to the urban areas. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that when the Committee submits a Report, whether he will take up planting of these medicinal trees of *Neem* on both sides of the Highways, which is quite popular in Tamil Nadu.

The second part of my question though is not directly related to the Question and it is about the stretch of this road from Chengelpat to Dindivanam, which is being laid and its work is progressing well. But, there are some

impediments in acquiring the land. I would like to request the hon. Minister, in the meantime, whether he will intervene personally and see that the work is expedited to avoid the cost overrun and time overrun. Thank you, Sir.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: Sir, as regards the first part, certainly it will be included. The Chairman of this Committee which has been formed is the Chief Executive Officer of the National Medicinal Plant Board and the issue of *Neem* will certainly be considered. Regarding the second part of his question, I will have to look into it.

MR. SPEAKER: Question number 202. Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: The hon. Member from Tamil Nadu asked a straight question about the stones having the inscription indicating the mileage in Hindi. He wants to put that question. Why should he be surpassed? The people do not know Hindi there. Even I do not know Hindi. ...(Interruptions) Had I known Hindi, my behaviour would have been different. Even I do not know Hindi.

MR. SPEAKER: That question is over. Shri Pandian, please sit down.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: That is an important question. ...(Interruptions) In Tamil Nadu, all the milestones are written in Hindi. How will I know what is written there? Even I do not know Hindi. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Pandian, please sit down. The Minister wants to reply.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You also sit down. The Minister is desirous of giving reply. Shri Krishnan, the Minister wants to reply that question. I have permitted him. Though this question is not arising out of the original Question, since he has expressed a desire, I am permitting him on Shri Krishnan's request.

...(Interruptions)

DR. C. KRISHNAN: All the milestones are in Hindi and English. We want them to be in Tamil and English. This is an indirect way of imposing Hindi on Tamilians. Former Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru gave an assurance that Hindi will not be imposed on non-Hindi speaking people. ...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon'ble Minister is giving reply. You please listen to him.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Shri Mahtab, will you please wait for a minute? Yes, Mr. Minister.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: May I request the House to listen to what the Minister has to say?

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Will they allow Tamil in Bihar, Orissa and Uttar Pradesh? They cannot. There was an anti-Hindi agitation in Tamil Nadu in 1960s in which so many people have sacrificed their lives. We celebrate their sacrifice every year. Therefore, on the question of language, we cannot compromise. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please go to your seat, Shri Ponnuswamy. Hon. Members are aware that the Minister is on his legs to reply. Shri Krishnan, I have agreed for the Minister to reply the Question because he wanted to reply. The question of languages is not arising from this. Still, hon. members want to know from the Minister whether the three-language formula is going to be accepted. I have permitted the Minister to reply. Please let the Minister reply.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Hindi is our national language and there should be use of Hindi. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Khanduriji knows very good Hindi.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. An important question has been raised in the House. I can ask the Minister to reply the question. I am sure that the Minister knows how serious the matter is.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I do not know why this shouting is going on. I really do not understand. The Minister is ready to reply.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. This will be very unfortunate. On the issue of languages if there are two groups, both groups must try to understand each other. This is a question of national integration.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Whatever reply you want, the Minister is giving. Why do you not permit him to speak?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, allow me to speak. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Whatever reply you want, if the Minister is giving, why are you not permitting him to speak? Please sit down. Go back to your seats.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, allow me to speak. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: A very important question has been raised and I have asked the Minister to reply. Please go back to your seats. Let the Minister reply. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, allow me to speak. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. No. Not at all. I have allowed the Minister to reply. I have not allowed anybody to speak now.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, allow me to speak. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pandian, try to understand. The Minister is going to reply.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want so submit. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You have already submitted. Do you want to submit again? What you want to submit now? You have already expressed your views. On your request I have made a special case and permitted. Now, the Minister please.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, allow me to speak.
...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Nobody is permitted to speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Okay. Let me know what Mr. Pandian wants to speak.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Thank you, Speaker, Sir.
...(Interruptions) Kindly appreciate the sentiment of the Members from Tamil Nadu. In Tamil Nadu, it is an inflammatory issue. Sir, in 1965, when Hindi was imposed, the Dravidian party, headed by Annadurai launched an anti-Hindi agitation. In that agitation, a number of people of DMK party were killed. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Let me ask him to put a question. Please sit down.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, language is an important issue. We do not comprise on Tamil language. Tamil has rich heritage. Tamil is an ancient language. Tamil language has a lot of literature like other languages have. Tamil language is spoken by 10 crore of people throughout the world.

Sir, I would appeal that the sentiments of the Members be appreciated by other Members. We have already been tolerating every Member in every meeting. You may remember that in the Business advisory Committee meeting, I may not be able to communicate with you because all the Members speak in Hindi. So, we are seriously handicapped. Even in this House, we have to safeguard the heritage of Tamil. ...(Interruptions) It is an ancient language.

MR. SPEAKER: No slogan should go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Sir, Tamil language is a rich language. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Pandian, now, you may please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Cutting across party lines, we have to preserve Tamil from the Members of Parliament. I would say that Tamil be retained on the milestones on the National Highways. It is a burning issue. The people of Tamil Nadu will not comprise on this language. Even, the political parties will not comprise. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I just want to ask the hon. Members.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. I want to make the position clear.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The Government has not made its stand clear on the issue, why are you shouting? Let us all understand the exact position. Let me explain what has happened. Mr. Krishnan put a question and said about the milestones on the Highways in Tamil Nadu. That was his supplementary. The supplementary was not arising out of the original Question. So, I disallowed that. Thereafter, Shri Pandian and other Members said that this is an important question and a lot of injustice is being done in Tamil Nadu. So, I asked the Government about its stand.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Let me complete. The Minister wants to make his stand clear. If his stand is clear according to the present rules, then there is nothing to grudge. I really do not understand why you are shouting. If there is something to grudge and you shout, then I can understand. But the Government has not made its stand clear. Let the Government say the present stand on the issue. Shri Palanimanickam has also desired...

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, eighty per cent people speak Hindi ...(Interruptions) Hon'ble Khanduriji do not live in England. He can give reply in Hindi. ...(Interruptions) Hindi is the national language. ...(Interruptions) Khanduriji hails from Uttaranchal
...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Let the Minister tell what the Government's stand is, and if the Minister says something against the rules, then you can shout, When the Minister has not said anything, why are you shouting? The Members may say anything, but that may not be the stand of the Government, let the Government's stand be made clear.

[Translation]

If the answer is not acceptable to you, then only you will speak. The reply has not come as yet, so what will you speak.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, we also want to speak.

MR. SPEAKER: Prabhu Nath Singhji, if the reply of the Minister is not acceptable to you only then I will give you a chance to speak. You please sit down. Let the Minister tell the stand of the Government.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon'ble Minister may please tell about the formula of the Government with regard to the language throughout the country.

*...(Interruptions)**[English]*

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI: The three-language formula is being followed in marking the milestones. There is no change from the existing policy
...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Khanduriji hails from Uttaranchal, he can speak Hindi *...(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Hindi is the national-language. he can speak Hindi *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want to change the Government policy, in the Question Hour?

*...(Interruptions)**[Translation]*

MR. SPEAKER: Akhilesh Singhji, you please ask the question?

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Whether Khanduriji asks for votes in English. *...(Interruptions)* Mr. Speaker, Sir, kindly hold a discussion on the issue of language also *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Palanimanickam, you also sit down.

*...(Interruptions)**[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. DMK Members are requested to sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please go to your seats.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The Prime Minister wants to make a statement. Please go to your seats.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: The Prime Minister wants to make a statement. Please go to your seats.

*...(Interruptions)**[Translation]*

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): Mr. Speaker, Sir, please adjourn the House for some time. *...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I adjourn the House for fifteen minutes during the Question Hour. We will meet after fifteen minutes.

11.33 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till forty-eight minutes past Eleven of the Clock.

11.48 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at forty-eight minutes past Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS—Contd.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Question No. 202—Shri Bhartruhari Mahtab.

Centrally Sponsored Health Schemes/Programmes

*202. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Centrally Sponsored Health Schemes/Programmes in operation in the country—particularly in Orissa;

(b) the assistance extended to each of the States for the same during the last three years; and

(c) the extent to which these schemes/programmes have been successful in controlling the various diseases, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) Government is implementing major National Health Programmes throughout the country, including Orissa, for control of diseases like Malaria, TB, Blindness, Leprosy and AIDS. The assistance extended to each of the States, including Orissa, under these programmes during the last three years is at Annexure-I.

(c) The State-wise achievements of these programmes during the year 2001-02 is at Annexure-II.

Annexure I

National Anti Malaria Programme

State-wise Allocation/Releases under Centrally Sponsored Programmes in the Deptt. of Health during the last three years (1999-2002)

(Rs. in Lakhs)

State	1999-00 Allo./Rel.	2000-01 Allo./Rel.	2001-02 Allo./Rel.	Total (1999-2002) Allo./Rel.
1	2	3	4	5
Andaman & Nicobar	116.46	208.13	226.84	551.43
Andhra Pradesh	1047.91	2418.88	794.77	4261.56
Arunachal Pradesh	303.27	343.91	486.93	1134.11
Assam	2267.03	5514.11	1983.27	9764.41
Bihar	562.36	538.69	377.44	1478.49
Chandigarh	47.25	50.00	41.06	138.31
Chhattisgarh	0.00	271.65	826.39	1098.04
D & N Haveli	25.94	40.03	40.67	106.64
Daman & Diu	16.42	18.86	16.08	51.36
Delhi	75.40	90.97	97.57	263.94
Goa	10.93	8.71	6.08	25.72

1	2	3	4	5
Gujarat	1464.01	1669.02	1330.96	4463.99
Haryana	259.03	197.22	18.43	474.68
Himachal Pradesh	46.11	90.30	2.20	138.61
Jammu & Kashmir	52.73	86.96	22.96	162.65
Jharkhand	0.00	90.00	759.92	849.92
Karnataka	602.66	352.68	308.24	1263.58
Kerala	126.42	84.35	64.22	274.99
Lakshadweep	5.81	10.98	6.35	23.14
Madhya Pradesh	2012.59	1976.66	2238.77	6228.02
Maharashtra	2234.35	1481.06	2239.20	5954.61
Manipur	403.05	520.37	358.91	1282.33
Meghalaya	306.70	337.64	384.02	1028.36
Mizoram	309.56	385.11	433.94	1128.61
Nagaland	240.83	290.38	346.91	878.12
Orissa	788.17	1173.68	1478.23	3440.08
Pondicherry	10.32	22.03	13.43	45.78
Punjab	288.96	230.77	49.38	569.11
Rajasthan	1244.91	967.35	534.04	2746.30
Sikkim	11.65	10.65	0.11	22.41
Tamilnadu	400.36	174.92	303.11	878.39
Tripura	375.89	599.05	542.45	1795.88
Uttar Pradesh	641.51	605.75	548.62	1795.88
Uttaranchal	0.00	0.00	23.64	23.64
West Bengal	296.26	354.86	589.86	1240.98
Total	16594.85	21215.73	17495.00	55305.58

National Leprosy Eradication Programme

*State-wise Allocation/Releases under Centrally Sponsored Programmes in the
Deptt. of Health during the last three years (1999-2002)*

(Rs. in Lakhs)

States	1999-2000 Rel.	2000-2001 Rel.	2001-2002 Rel.	Total (1999-2002) Rel.
1	2	3	4	5
Andaman & Nicobar	5.63	1.00	18.30	24.93
Andhra Pradesh	442.21	508.75	223.83	1174.79

1	2	3	4	5
Arunachal Pradesh	60.36	136.00	62.09	258.45
Assam	235.93	112.00	153.85	501.78
Bihar	1323.77	869.80	663.94	2857.51
Chandigarh	13.29	3.50	5.50	22.29
Chhattisgarh	0.00	0.00	378.34	378.34
D & N Haveli	1.17	8.79	6.00	15.96
Daman & Diu	9.50	14.50	18.40	42.40
Delhi	14.38	41.50	48.36	104.24
Goa	1.51	1.50	11.52	14.53
Gujarat	230.37	230.00	61.97	522.34
Haryana	43.24	23.00	61.94	128.18
Himachal Pradesh	54.53	61.00	49.69	165.22
Jammu & Kashmir	63.61	87.00	100.55	251.16
Jharkhand	0.00	0.00	356.23	356.23
Karnataka	247.98	302.75	196.05	746.78
Kerala	147.30	237.00	74.61	458.91
Lakshadweep	1.36	3.00	6.00	10.36
Madhya Pradesh	794.35	645.36	395.32	1835.03
Maharashtra	391.04	398.60	435.99	1225.63
Manipur	95.71	125.00	71.02	291.73
Meghalaya	45.26	47.00	46.94	139.20
Mizoram	51.22	61.00	60.51	172.73
Nagaland	106.09	109.00	89.22	304.31
Orissa	581.09	628.00	540.77	1749.86
Pondicherry	2.00	7.00	2.00	11.00
Punjab	110.39	36.00	32.30	168.69
Rajasthan	148.37	105.00	123.07	376.44
Sikkim	71.36	41.71	34.87	147.94
Tamilnadu	385.79	422.74	413.04	1221.57
Tripura	47.18	34.00	46.47	127.65
Uttar Pradesh	1417.10	1093.51	129.01	2639.62
Uttaranchal	0.00	0.00	1282.50	1282.50
West Bengal	841.53	784.00	574.66	2200.19
Total	7974.62	7179.01	6774.86	21928.49

National TB Control Programme

State-wise Allocation/Releases under Centrally Sponsored Programmes in the Deptt. of Health during the last three years (1999-2002)

(Rs. in Lakhs)

State/UT	1999-2000 Alloc.	2000-2001 Alloc.	2001-2002 Alloc.	Total (1999-2002) Alloc.
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	478.16	442.13	1200.00	2120.29
Andaman & Nicobar	1.24	2.54	1.53	5.31
Arunachal Pradesh	2.52	94.10	119.42	216.03
Assam	113.04	294.32	212.38	619.74
Bihar	1044.68	1015.06	700.05	2759.79
Chandigarh	3.44	7.27	12.84	23.55
Chhattisgarh	0.00	0.00	36.54	36.54
D & N Haveli	0.66	0.07	0.04	0.77
Daman & Diu	0.49	1.46	0.88	2.82
Delhi	0.00	192.23	228.75	420.98
Goa	3.14	12.72	15.55	31.41
Gujarat	1192.41	867.72	810.07	2870.21
Haryana	78.38	233.31	195.23	506.92
Himachal Pradesh	132.37	114.84	183.57	430.78
Jammu & Kashmir	36.94	79.64	73.42	190.00
Jharkhand	0.00	0.00	55.13	55.13
Karnataka	694.67	661.83	632.73	1989.23
Kerala	877.25	599.18	687.23	2163.66
Lakshadweep	0.25	5.45	3.28	8.98
Madhya Pradesh	414.19	754.83	658.38	1827.39
Maharashtra	844.72	1257.08	1683.61	3785.40
Manipur	31.36	29.66	100.47	161.49
Meghalaya	8.52	19.46	19.59	47.56
Mizoram	3.45	7.47	14.17	25.09
Nagaland	2.74	13.64	99.36	115.75
Orissa	322.28	449.33	600.00	1371.61
Pondicherry	2.75	15.38	11.67	29.80

1	2	3	4	5
Punjab	95.07	226.14	281.74	602.94
Rajasthan	393.62	973.83	1072.53	2439.97
Sikkim	1.88	4.37	31.82	38.06
Tamilnadu	654.19	1117.60	999.81	2271.61
Tripura	13.23	29.81	30.52	73.56
Uttar Pradesh	889.02	1670.68	1402.20	3961.90
Uttaranchal	0.00	0.00	15.56	15.56
West Bengal	2063.34	1126.85	1109.92	4300.11
Total	10400.00	12320.00	13300.00	36019.97

National Programme for Control of Blindness

State-wise Allocation/Releases under Centrally Sponsored Programmes in the Deptt. of Health during the last three years (1999-2002)

(Rs. in Lakhs)

States	1999-2000 Rel.	2000-2001 Rel.	2001-2002 Rel.	Total (1999-2002) Rel.
1	2	3	4	5
Andaman & Nicobar	10.67	3.75	14.69	43.91
Andhra Pradesh	638.54	689.05	1,094.09	3325.52
Arunachal Pradesh	15.00	48.82	39.80	119.16
Assam	81.50	207.09	69.35	556.13
Bihar	108.58	306.30	81.85	763.67
Chandigarh	11.44	11.00	23.25	63.29
Chhattisgarh	140.00	126.98	162.00	601.98
D & N Haveli	2.50	105.64	7.93	129.77
Daman & Diu	9.40	12.60	65.81	103.51
Delhi	42.40	61.29	37.09	178.23
Goa	14.50	41.20	113.54	241.14
Gujarat	404.50	384.00	169.35	1238.85
Haryana	169.27	178.00	117.75	618.49
Himachal Pradesh	86.25	131.00	51.51	384.76
Jammu & Kashmir	40.75	106.50	91.93	370.34

1	2	3	4	5
Jharkhand	46.00	54.00	24.59	224.59
Karnataka	352.20	305.89	376.15	1463.03
Kerala	263.39	294.20	137.11	842.61
Lakshadweep	5.72	229.59	4.60	264.65
Madhya Pradesh	969.51	832.39	991.72	4363.89
Maharashtra	998.85	766.38	1,298.99	3925.74
Manipur	9.00	55.94	36.64	137.76
Meghalaya	21.00	153.84	95.25	315.90
Mizoram	26.50	79.57	34.02	172.88
Nagaland	14.00	40.58	56.79	181.82
Orissa	535.73	1,187.45	448.67	3239.13
Pondicherry	20.82	14.50	5.75	50.37
Punjab	199.61	117.60	55.62	484.08
Rajasthan	428.41	946.45	1,121.21	3110.17
Sikkim	15.25	103.39	20.53	173.39
Tamilnadu	1,196.44	1,111.05	2,165.37	6003.18
Tripura	35.39	68.80	513.85	689.20
Uttar Pradesh	1,042.55	940.39	1,935.27	5427.24
Uttaranchal	50.00	80.34	187.40	440.74
West Bengal	194.10	275.00	122.53	790.08
Total	8,199.79	10,070.57	11,766.00	41039.01

National AIDS Control Programme

State-wise Allocation/Releases under Centrally Sponsored Programmes in the Deptt. of Health during the last three years (1999-2002)

(Rs. in Lakhs)

State	1999-2000 Rel.	2000-2001 Rel.	2001-2002 Rel.	Total (1999-2002) Rel.
1	2	3	4	5
Andaman & Nicobar	50.00	66.44	95.50	211.94
Andhra Pradesh	1219.67	1074.50	1875.00	4169.17
Arunachal Pradesh	159.00	111.00	214.88	484.88

1	2	3	4	5
Assam	322.00	375.00	653.80	1350.80
Bihar	55.00	196.00	809.50	1060.50
Chandigarh	115.00	93.11	152.65	360.76
Chhattisgarh	0.00	0.00	150.50	150.50
D & N Haveli	25.00	9.00	26.00	60.00
Daman & Diu	95.00	9.00	31.00	135.00
Delhi	283.00	239.00	334.00	856.00
Goa	98.00	72.73	99.00	269.73
Gujarat	796.00	681.78	1188.30	2666.08
Haryana	270.00	246.50	266.00	782.50
Himachal Pradesh	318.00	262.50	308.50	889.00
Jammu & Kashmir	25.00	152.00	244.50	421.50
Jharkhand	0.00	0.00	156.00	156.00
Karnataka	801.67	398.65	785.15	1985.47
Kerala	280.00	600.63	835.00	1715.63
Lakshadweep	25.00	9.16	29.50	63.66
Madhya Pradesh	352.31	542.00	780.50	1674.81
Maharashtra	1668.35	1283.65	1281.65	4233.65
Manipur	352.38	415.30	708.15	1475.83
Meghalaya	70.14	87.50	224.93	382.57
Mizoram	168.00	179.00	246.70	593.70
Nagaland	380.00	250.50	635.50	1266.00
Orissa	200.00	408.50	565.00	1173.50
Pondicherry	25.00	21.50	54.00	100.50
Punjab	312.39	321.50	266.50	900.39
Rajasthan	150.00	380.00	317.50	847.50
Sikkim	25.00	66.00	120.02	211.02
Tamilnadu	1596.58	1870.92	2095.56	5563.06
Tripura	50.00	92.00	196.67	338.67
Uttar Pradesh	851.00	1175.00	1059.50	3085.50
Uttaranchal	0.00	0.00	1465.65	1465.65
West Bengal	425.00	643.15	98.00	1166.15
Total	11563.49	12333.52	18370.61	42267.62

Annexure II**National Anti Malaria Programme****State-wise Physical Performance during 2001**

State	2001 (Prov.)	
	ABER	API
1	2	3
Andaman & Nicobar	53.99	2.03
Andhra Pradesh	10.61	0.72
Arunachal Pradesh	29.09	49.44
Assam	8.4	3.42
Bihar	0.38	0.04
Chandigarh	9.86	0.37
Chhattisgarh	16.17	11.17
D & N Haveli	16.01	3.85
Daman & Diu	14.37	0.55
Delhi	8.3	0.11
Goa	20.63	9.17
Gujarat	13.89	1.66
Haryana	10.8	0.06
Himachal Pradesh	11.09	0.07
Jammu & Kashmir	7.41	0.2
Jharkhand	3.23	4.72

1	2	3
Karnataka	18.35	3.87
Kerala	4.98	0.07
Lakshadweep	3.12	0
Madhya Pradesh	13.82	2.9
Maharashtra	14.3	0.57
Manipur	4.37	0.39
Meghalaya	9.83	7.12
Mizoram	25.34	12.3
Nagaland	2.63	2.31
Orissa	10.25	11.06
Pondicherry	31.72	0.11
Punjab	11.24	0.02
Rajasthan	15.33	2.94
Sikkim	7.96	0.23
Tamilnadu	10.33	0.46
Tripura	8.8	5.57
Uttar Pradesh	178	0.6
Uttaranchal	1.52	0.17
West Bengal	3.51	1.53
All India Total	8.71	1.96

ABER : Annual Blood Examination Rate

API : Annual Parasitic Incidence.

National Leprosy Eradication Programme .**State-wise target (T) and Achievement (A) in Respect of Case Detection, Treatment and Discharge during 2001-02**

S.No.	State/Sector	2001-2002					
		Cases Detected		Cases Treated		Cases Discharged	
		T	A	T	A	T	A
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A. STATES							
1.	Andhra Pradesh	15000	51183	15000	51183	43000	54491
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	80	119	80	119	200	137

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3.	Assam	800	2464	800	2464	3000	2400
4.	Bihar	18000	120005	18000	120005	75000	103626
5.	Goa	50	337	50	337	470	469
6.	Gujarat	3000	10949	3000	10949	11000	11151
7.	Haryana	50	766	50	766	800	832
8.	Himachal Pradesh	50	263	50	263	340	368
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	50	645	50	645	1000	759
10.	Karnataka	8000	18761	8000	18761	14000	17418
11.	Kerala	2500	2420	2500	2420	3500	2981
12.	Madhya Pradesh	10000	18345	10000	18345	18000	18693
13.	Maharashtra	16000	46371	16000	46371	35000	44000
14.	Manipur	80	160	80	160	250	225
15.	Meghalaya	30	48	30	48	70	46
16.	Mizoram	20	24	20	24	60	52
17.	Nagaland	15	73	15	73	50	69
18.	Orissa	18000	40565	18000	40565	36000	37628
19.	Punjab	100	1401	100	1401	1450	1368
20.	Rajasthan	1200	2012	1200	2012	5000	2031
21.	Sikkim	20	73	20	73	50	55
22.	Tamil Nadu	15000	32251	15000	32251	43000	37756
23.	Tripura	20	102	20	102	160	95
24.	Uttar Pradesh	29000	110989	29000	110989	86500	97287
25.	West Bengal	18000	46214	18000	46214	30800	35739
26.	A & N Islands	20	67	20	67	100	83
27.	Chandigarh	20	333	20	333	300	271
28.	D & N Haveli	20	331	20	331	160	211
29.	Daman & Diu	10	44	10	44	40	38
30.	Delhi	100	5234	100	5324	6600	5614
31.	Lakshadweep	10	7	10	7	15	6
32.	Pondicherry	100	462	100	462	600	531
33.	Jharkhand	12000	45143	12000	45143	25000	38905
34.	Chhattisgarh	15000	27470	15000	27470	12000	20363
35.	Uttaranchal	1000	2537	1000	2537	1500	2048
	Total	183345	592758	183345	592758	455015	537746

National TB Control Programme

Targets vis-a-vis Achievement of NTP under 20-Point Programme with regard to Sputum Examination

Name of the State/ Union Territory	2001-02		
	Target	Achievements	Percentage
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	378,500	306345	80.94
Arunachal Pradesh	5,450	6090	111.74
Assam	133,000	23881	17.96
Bihar	414,500	—	—
Chhattisgarh	104,000	50731	48.78
Goa	6,500	7443	114.51
Gujarat	253,000	171175	67.66
Haryana	105,500	105563	100.06
Himachal Pradesh	30,400	49061	161.38
Jammu & Kashmir	50,500	104286	206.51
Jharkhand	134,500	6113	4.54
Karnataka	264,000	260596	98.71
Kerala	159,000	61004	38.37
Madhya Pradesh	302,000	304176	100.72
Maharashtra	484,000	614460	126.95
Manipur	11,950	9968	83.41
Meghalaya	11,500	5244	45.60
Mizoram	4,450	3259	73.24
Nagaland	9,950	2795	28.09
Orissa	183,500	54047	29.45
Punjab	121,000	127124	105.06
Rajasthan	282,500	158268	56.02
Sikkim	2,750	7256	263.85
Tamil Nadu	310,500	371050	119.50
Tripura	15,950	12967	81.30
Uttaranchal	42,350	55260	130.48
Uttar Pradesh	830,500	788579	94.95
West Bengal	401,00	35494	8.85

1	2	3	4
A & N Islands	1,800	3773	209.61
Chandigarh	4,500	3387	75.27
D & N Haveli	1,100	1213	110.27
Daman & Diu	800	1295	161.88
Delhi	69,000	95037	137.73
Lakshadweep	300	203	67.67
Pondicherry	4,850	17311	356.93
Total	5,135,100	3824454	74.48

National TB Control Programme

Targets vis-a-vis Achievement of NTP under 20-Point Programme with regard to Sputum positive

Name of the State/ Union Territory	2001-02		
	Target	Achievements	Percentage
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	37850	30850	81.51
Arunachal Pradesh	545	446	81.83
Assam	13300	3037	22.83
Bihar	41450	0	0.00
Chhattisgarh	10400	3213	30.89
Goa	650	495	76.15
Gujarat	25300	32213	127.32
Haryana	10550	10942	103.72
Himachal Pradesh	3040	1132	37.24
Jammu & Kashmir	5050	4862	96.28
Jharkhand	13450	878	6.53
Karnataka	26400	31099	117.80
Kerala	15900	4473	28.13
Madhya Pradesh	30200	28942	95.83
Maharashtra	48400	53410	110.35
Manipur	1195	1473	123.26
Meghalaya	1150	915	79.57

1	2	3	4
Mizoram	445	369	92.82
Nagaland	995	571	57.39
Orissa	18350	6341	34.58
Punjab	12100	9336	77.16
Rajasthan	28250	33814	119.70
Sikkim	275	589	214.18
Tamil Nadu	31050	22502	72.47
Tripura	1595	928	58.18
Uttaranchal	4235	3909	92.30
Uttar Pradesh	83050	80666	97.13
West Bengal	40100	3688	9.20
A & N Islands	180	209	116.11
Chandigarh	450	0	0.00
D & N Haveli	110	113	102.73
Daman & Diu	80	101	126.25
Delhi	6900	18521	268.42
Lakshadweep	30	1	3.33
Pondicherry	485	1511	311.55
Total	513510	391548	76.25

National Programme for Control of Blindness

State-wise Target and Achievement of Cataract Surgery done in 2001-02

States	Target	Ach.
1	2	3

World Bank Project States

Andhra Pradesh	350000	371949
Madhya Pradesh	240000	234527
Chhattisgarh	80000	52224
Maharashtra	420000	473145
Orissa	130000	86386
Rajasthan	220000	196835

1	2	3
Tamilnadu	400000	373058
Uttar Pradesh	450000	536647
Uttaranchal	31056	27544
Sub Total	2321056	2352315

Other States

Arunachal Pradesh	1000	436
Assam	45000	17633
Bihar	140000	76654
Jharkhand	70000	29510
Delhi	80000	55822

1	2	3	1	2	3
Goa	7000	5043	Sikkim	1000	475
Gujarat	400000	414580	Tripura	8000	8720
Haryana	1100000	102171	West Bengal	220000	229665
Himachal Pradesh	16000	16843	A & N Island	500	508
Jammu & Kashmir	13000	10503	Chandigarh	5500	5251
Karnataka	220000	202851	D & N Haveli	330	572
Kerala	90000	68023	Daman & Diu	350	367
Manipur	2000	697	Lakshadweep	20	2
Meghalaya	2000	1238	Pondicherry	7000	7374
Mizoram	800	715	Others	10000	5842
Nagaland	500	340	Sub Total	1610000	1382339
Punjab	160000	120504	Grand Total	3931056	3734654

National AIDS Control Programme (2001-02)

State	No. of STD Clinics	No. of TI Project	No. of VCTCs	No. of Major Blood Banks	No. of District Blood Banks	No. of ZBTCs	No. of Sentinel Sites	No. of Community Care Centre	No. of Blood Units Collected
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Andaman & Nicobar	3	3	3	1	1	1	4	0	2550
Andhra Pradesh	28	103	30	21	40	12	13	1	158743
Arunachal Pradesh	6	2	4	1	4	1	3	0	970
Assam	7	10	9	3	15	3	5	2	26639
Bihar (Including Jharkhand)	21	1	15	9	42	9	12	0	57457
Chandigarh	3	6	3	2	1	1	3	0	48237
D & N Haveli	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	—	N.A.
Daman & Diu	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	N.A.
Delhi	11	10	7	2	14	5	9	2	137085
Goa	4	6	2	2	1	2	5	0	7760
Gujarat	31	70	20	13	42	6	15	0	275020
Haryana	11	9	6	4	14	4	7	0	81232
Himachal Pradesh	20	4	5	3	6	2	12	0	14539
Jammu & Kashmir	10	1	8	7	6	2	5	0	N.A.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Karnataka	34	18	33	13	39	9	18	4	249687
Kerala	24	35	14	14	21	5	6	0	129934
Lakshadweep	1	0	1	0	1	3	0	0	N.A.
Madhya Pradesh (Including Chhattisgarh)	50	10	20	9	39	10	24	0	57125
Maharashtra	334	46	33	30	41	7	34	1	326797
Manipur	9	17	10	2	—	1	13	2	14762
Meghalaya	6	3	3	1	2	1	5	0	1729
Mizoram	8	8	5	4	1	0	6	0	8630
Nagaland	8	15	9	1	8	3	7	0	1126
Orissa	19	8	5	7	39	4	11	0	107005
Pondicherry	5	1	1	2	1	1	4	1	5093
Punjab	7	6	6	12	25	3	7	0	88930
Rajasthan	24	12	8	8	11	6	12	0	115124
Sikkim	2	3	2	1	1	1	3	—	999
Tamil Nadu (Including Chennai)	53	103	38	28	67	19	17	0	304097
Tripura	3	8	2	6	1	0	3	0	10638
Uttar Pradesh (Including Uttaranchal)	44	16	20	22	47	13	27	0	156643
West Bengal	30	37	10	15	61	9	15	0	73569
Total States	516	571	334	245	591	144	307	13	2462120

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: My first supplementary question is relating to the National Anti Malaria Programme. Now, in the whole country, in different States, the National Anti Malaria Programme is being implemented on 50:50 basis. But only 1,045 Primary Health centres, spread over 100 tribal districts, get 100 per cent grant from the Centre and this is confined to eight States. It is for a period of five years.

My question is relating to Orissa. Some districts of Orissa which are tribal-inhabited have been included. But Orissa being a very poor State, cash-starved, it is necessary to include all the Primary Health Centres in this Programme. Secondly, Malaria can be eradicated if we have para-medical officers. Majority of the Primary Health Centres in Orissa do not have para-medical officers. My specific question is, will the Central Government provide funds for the appointment of para-

medical officers so that the National Anti Malaria Programme can become a success because in Orissa malaria is becoming a nuisance day-by-day?

SHRI A. RAJA: As the hon. Member has put it, I would like to say that some of the districts in the State of Orissa have been identified. Those districts were more affected by malaria. As such, apart from the National Control Programme for Malaria for all the States, a special scheme in the name of Enhanced Malaria Control Programme for these districts has been launched by the Central Government as a special package. For that, separate district-level societies have been constituted. But the problem is this. I have to share this problem with the hon. Members. So far as the Centrally-sponsored-Scheme or the Central Sector Scheme—whatever it may be—is concerned, we are funding it through the States to eradicate not only malaria but also. TB, AIDS and all the

major diseases. So far as the infrastructure is concerned, all Sub-Centres in the country—one lakh thirty seven Sub-Centres are available in the country—are being taken care of by the Central Government. Other Primary Health Centres, district-level hospitals and Community Health Centres are being taken care of by the State Governments only. But our funding is there.

The hon. Member's question pertains to this. We wanted to know whether the Government of India is inclined to tackle the matter, to strengthen the Primary Health Centres and the para-medical staff. There is no scope for this under the Budgetary support of the Central Government. If the State Government is ready to give more infrastructure for this, if any fund is being asked for by the State Government, it will be considered in due course.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: It is about enhancing the scope ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: You should put the supplementary question now.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: My question was about enhancing the scope. It has confined to eight States, in the peninsular States. It is confined to only 1,045 Primary Health Centres. Mr. Minister, are you going to expand it? That was my first supplementary.

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Malaria has been eradicated from our country but some cases of this disease has been detected. So we have started Anti-Malaria campaign at national level. We have started this campaign only in those areas where cases of high risk Malaria have been detected. My colleague, Minister of State has stated that E.M.C.P. has been started in 22 districts of Orissa. It is not going to be expanded to the whole of the country. We have started special enhanced Malaria control programme only in those areas, where cases of this disease have been detected. Orissa is one of those states, where cases of Malaria have been detected. We have identified 22 districts of Orissa as high risk districts and we have started E.M.C.P. there. There is no need to expand it throughout the country. But if cases of this disease are found in some other part of the country, we will expand this programme to that area also.

[*English*]

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: My second supplementary is relating to AIDS prevention. Normally, it is said that prevention is better than cure. All along, our National Health Policy relating to AIDS eradication is relating to prevention.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question straight now.

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: My question is this. There is a National AIDS Control Programme Phase-II which is going on now. Identification has been done in the case of a majority of people who are suffering from AIDS. Our stress is more on prevention. That much of care is not being taken of the patients who are affected by this disease. What specific programme is being chalked out to take care of the AIDS victims or AIDS patients?

SHRI A. RAJA: As the hon. Member has put it, so far as AIDS cases are concerned, the Government is not ready to give the medicine Anti-Retro-Viral drug which is costly in nature. We cannot afford to give any such medicine to the AIDS patients. The Government of India is committed to achieve the zero level growth through the National Health Policy. By 2007, we should achieve the zero level growth of HIV. For that, we are making our own IEC activities—Information Education and Communicative activities—to make known among the public how AIDS is being spread and it can be avoided among the stagnated and stinking pool masses. For that, the first goal is this. What we achieved in the country is this. All the district-level hospitals, at least, should have the STD clinics—the Sexually Transmitted Disease clinics—where a person can go for treatment. Since it is a voluntary one, we cannot compel a person to tell whether he is having AIDS or not. He should go voluntarily before the district-level hospital and check it up where he is having AIDS or not. So, first of all, that awareness should be inculcated in the minds of the people in this country where we are having more people illiterate. For that, the Government of India is committed to have more awareness among the public, and for that, we have the STD clinics and other IEC activities.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJO SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, very short time is left. The Government allocate funds to control Malaria, T.B., blindness, leprosy and AIDS. The Central Government allocated Rs. 1478.49 lakh for Bihar but only Rs. 736.67 lakh were given to the State. What is the reason for this? The Central Government has given Rs. 2857.51 lakh for leprosy eradication. I would like to

know from the Government whether the Bihar Government has spent the said amount and if so, the details thereof. If the said funds have not been spent, what the Central Government is going to do? So that the poor people can be benefitted by these schemes.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, all these five programmes are centrally sponsored. The Central Government provides funds and the State Government run these programmes. Hon'ble Member has mentioned that Rs. 1478.49 lakh were allocated to the Bihar Government but only Rs. 763.67 lakh have been released. In this connection, I would like to say that under these programmes funds are not released at a time. First we receive utilisation certificate from the State Government and only then we release second instalment. If we do not receive utilisation certificate or the funds are not spent. We do not release next instalment. If lesser funds have been released against the allocated funds to the State Government by the Central Government, it means it is a comment on the working capacity of the State Government. That is why second instalment of funds is released only when the State Government has sent the utilisation certificate.

SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government has given details about all the States including Bihar in which allocation of funds to the State Governments every year, and their achievements, have been indicated. From the Government data it has come to notice that there has been partial success in controlling the blindness, leprosy etc. in Bihar. But so far as T.B. is concerned a target of checking or treating 4,14,005 patients was fixed but there was nil achievement. Neither there is proper facility for checking this disease nor proper medicines are provided in a backward state like Bihar. Therefore people have to come to city like Delhi for their treatment. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister that keeping in view the target and achievement in Bihar in this regard what steps are being taken to provide proper medicine to treat T.B. in the state. Whether the Government is going to take action against those employees who are not working properly or what action the Government is going to take against the Bihar Government which is not utilising the funds properly?

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I have already told in a reply to the earlier question that this scheme is run by State Government. As far as figures furnished by the Hon'ble Member is concerned the Central Government only provides money and if the achievement of the State Government is Zero, what can the Government of India do in this regard? We are answerable only when the State Government demands money from us and we do not provide the same to it.

When a scheme is run by State Governments, the Central Government can not own the responsibility of running the scheme. I have a suggestion that the State Government should utilize this money so as to enhance its achievement.

[English]

SHRI A.C. JOS: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the amount that is allotted to the State Governments for eradication of these diseases is quite inadequate. So, the State Governments are negotiating with the World Bank for getting secondary assistance for implementing their health schemes. The Government of Kerala has negotiated with the World Bank and it has sanctioned Rs. 600 or Rs. 700 crore of secondary assistance for their health scheme. The matter has gone to the Planning Commission and the Planning Commission, I understand, has sent it to the Health Ministry. The Health Ministry has now passed it and sent it to the Ministry of External Affairs. It is going from pillar to post. In many places, these schemes have been sanctioned without going to all these places.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Jos, please come to the question.

SHRI A.C. JOS: So, will the hon. Minister take personal interest in this matter and sanction the scheme as early as possible?

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, if you remember, the same question was also asked by Mr. Jos earlier and he always asks. Previously also I had told that I would look into the scheme with personal interest.

[English]

This is under our consideration.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Appraisal of Ninth Plan

*203. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made an appraisal of the anti poverty programmes implemented in the 9th Plan;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof and the shortcomings noticed therein;

(c) whether these shortcomings were taken into account while preparing the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(d) if so, the measures in the Tenth Five Year Plan to meet these shortcomings; and

(e) the Central outlay proposed in the Tenth Five Year Plan for anti poverty programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes Sir. For the preparation of the Tenth Plan, Working Groups & Steering Committees were set up both for Rural and Urban Poverty Alleviation Programmes.

(b) to (d) These Groups/Committees appraised the on-going programmes and their implementation during the Ninth Plan period, and made recommendations for strengthening and improving the scope & content of these programmes for the Tenth Plan. The Tenth Plan chapters have taken note of the review of these programmes, and the recommendations have been suitably incorporated in the Tenth Plan document. In Major Poverty Alleviation Programmes the main changes included in the Tenth Five Year Plan are as given below:

RURAL POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES

1. *Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)*

The Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and its sub schemes including Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) & Training of Rural Youth for Self-Employment (TRYSEM) have been replaced by the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY). The individual beneficiary approach with fixing of targets, and timeframe has been given up under the SGSY. The SGSY has been conceived as a process-oriented programme for the poor with group formation as the focus. There are four stages in this process-social mobilization and formation of groups (initial phase), generation of savings and internal lending amongst the members of the group on their own, augmented by revolving fund grants (second phase), obtaining micro finance (third phase) and setting up of micro enterprises (fourth phase).

2. *Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)*

In view of the complimentarity of objectives, Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) and Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) were merged under the new scheme Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY). Under the SGRY while the focus continues to be on generation of wage employment and creation of durable rural assets & infrastructure, food security for the rural poor has also been built in. The SGRY would have three streams. One will address the need for rural infrastructure in all States; the other will provide focused attention to areas facing endemic poverty while the third stream would respond to natural calamities.

3. *Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)*

Evaluation studies of IAY showed that while the programme has certainly enabled many BPL families to acquire Pucca Houses, the coverage of beneficiaries is limited due to the resource constraints. Provision of houses free of cost under IAY has hampered progress in loan based schemes. In the Tenth Five Year Plan it has been suggested that provision of free houses under IAY be limited largely to SC/ST families living Below Poverty Line (BPL) and houseless persons. For other BPL families there would be a gradual shift to credit-linked housing programme.

4. It was observed that there are problems in the implementation and delivery of these programmes and not in the concept of the programmes. Consequently a greater role for Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and user groups in planning and implementation of these programmes has been envisaged, so as to ensure greater people's participation in the planning and implementation of anti-poverty programmes.

URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES:

1. The task of urban poverty alleviation and slum improvement should clearly be devolved to Municipalities by amending the State Legislation keeping in view the 74th Constitutional Amendment. City administrations should create Urban Poverty Alleviation Cells (UPA) at Municipal level.
2. UPA Cells should draft poverty alleviation plans in which the community organizations of the poor created under SJSRY should be involved.
3. Convergence of services, such as water supply, drainage, solid waste management, as well as health care, family welfare, education,

anganwadis and creches should be the main plank of urban poverty alleviation programmes.

4. City-wide Master Plans for slum improvement should be drawn up with the objective of removing the slum characteristics of the selected settlements.
5. The banking sector's role in providing credit support to the urban informal sector, specially the self-employed urban poor, should be restored.

(e) The Tenth Plan outlays for the Major Rural Poverty Alleviation Programmes are as under:

(Rs. Crore)		
S.No.	Name of the scheme	Tenth Plan Outlay
1.	Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)	3955.00
2.	Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY)	30000.00
3.	Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)	8603.00
4.	Swaran Jayanti Shahri Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY)	541.00

[Translation]

Space Programmes

*204. SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA:
SHRI J.S. BRAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Columbia disaster is likely to affect the space programmes of ISRO;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of space programmes slated for 2003-04 and 2004-05; and

(d) the role being played by NASA and Russia in achieving the targets set by ISRO?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Four launch vehicle missions and five satellite missions are slated for 2003-04. Two launch vehicle missions and four satellite missions are slated for 2004-05.

(d) India has a self-reliant space programme. However, bilateral agreements cover cooperation with National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and Russia, particularly in the area of space applications, which supplement ISRO's space programme.

[English]

Modernisation of Goods Transport Sector

*205. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE:
DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to modernise the goods transport sector by imposing stringent measures on overloading of long-haul trucks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the new concept of multi-axle trucks on highways would prove complementary to the efforts of the Government to upgrade highways and roads; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) Section 194 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988 lays the procedure for dealing with overloading and has provision for penalizing overloading of vehicles. Enforcement of the provision is the responsibility of the respective State Governments. D.O. letters have been written by Hon. Minister of State (Independent charge) of this Ministry to Hon'ble Chief Ministers on 3rd October, 2001 to strictly implement the provisions. In the 30th meeting of the Transport Development Council held on 16.1.2003, this was once again emphasised; all the States agreed to strictly enforce the provisions relating to overloading.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. Use of multi-axle vehicles will help in reducing stress on road pavements as these are road-friendly.

Exodus of Medicos

*206. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY:
SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that some of the top ranking doctors of AIIMS have already left the institute and many more are likely to resign as reported in the 'Statesman' dated February 5, 2003;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) During the last three years, out of the strength of 502 faculty members, only 20 persons have resigned or have taken voluntary retirement. The number thus works out to less than 2% per annum. The faculty members who resigned or took voluntary retirement have cited personal reasons for leaving the Institute. Most of them were working in the Institute of ad-hoc basis.

The pay and allowances and other service conditions of faculty members of AIIMS is superior as compared to those available to members of Central Health Service and other hospitals/government medical colleges.

[*Translation*]

Restructuring of CBI

*207. SHRI RAMSHAKAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the cases pending with CBI for investigation during the last three years;

(b) whether the Government propose to reorganize the existing set up of the Central Bureau of Investigation in order to dispose of the large number of pending cases; and

(c) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken to dispose of all the pending cases within a fixed time frame?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) On 1st January 2001, 2002 and 2003, the number of cases pending investigation was 1555, 1456 and 1478, respectively.

(b) and (c) As the CBI has ensured a gradual decrease in overall pendency, especially of cases pending investigation for over two years, through Annual Action Plans, restructuring of the CBI for eliminating this pendency is not envisaged.

The Action Plan, *inter alia*, contemplates preparation of list of cases pending investigation for over 2 years, assignment of each case to a team of Investigating Officers/Law Officers for handling on day-to-day basis, monthly review by the Joint Directors concerned & bimonthly review by the Special Director and equal distribution of cases under investigation amongst the Investigating Officers.

[*English*]

Immunisation Programme

*208. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI:
SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Immunisation Programme of the Government specially among the children of the under-privileged class has been adversely affected on account of lack of infrastructural support and supply of medicines;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the percentage of children covered under the Immunisation Programme as per the Census 2001;

(d) whether a comprehensive action plan to fight these diseases has been included in the Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (e) The Universal Immunisation Programme (UIP) was launched in 1985, with the objective to reduce infant and child mortality and morbidity due to vaccine preventable diseases, namely Neo Natal Tetanus, childhood

Tuberculosis, Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, Measles and Polio. The programme was expanded in a phased manner so as to cover all the districts in the country by 1990. In 1992, the UIP was integrated in the Child Survival and Safe Motherhood Programme and subsequently it was integrated in the Reproductive and Child Health Programme in 1997.

These immunization services are provided through a network of sub-centres, primary health centres and community health centres in the rural areas. In urban areas, most Government hospitals and post partum centres provide these immunization services.

The target of vaccination for each year is around 2.6 crore pregnant women and 2.5 crore infants.

Since 1990, the coverage of immunization reported has always been more than 85% for all vaccines. Since the implementation of this programme, there has been a reduction to the extent of over 78% of all vaccine preventable diseases and there has been a virtual elimination of the polio virus from most parts of the country, except in some endemic States in the north.

However, the Government is continually monitoring the progress of these programmes through an independent evaluation of the coverage.

According to the National Family Health Survey, 1999, nationally the evaluated coverage for BCG was 71.6%, DPT-55.1%, Polio-62.8% and Measles-50.7%. However, there are wide interstate differentials in coverage of immunization among children. While most of the States have been implementing the programme satisfactorily, the implementation of the programme in the States of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Jharkhand are not up to optimal levels primarily due to infrastructural deficiencies.

In order to improve the coverage in all States, especially in the poor performing States, additional support is being provided under the Immunization Programme in the form of mobility training, vaccine logistics, IEC, etc. 151 districts have been identified where the performance has been significantly poor and these districts are being additionally supported through Reproductive and Child Health out-reach services scheme in order to provide extra input for improving the coverage. Cold chain equipment, vaccine vans and other equipments are progressively being replaced. The Government also provides vaccine as commodity assistance to all the States and there is no shortage of vaccine in any part of the country.

Under the Tenth Five Year Plan, a comprehensive Plan of Action to improve Routine Immunization has been

included with special emphasis to provide support to poor performing States to meet their infrastructural gaps.

Allocation of Funds

*209. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds provided for the development of North Eastern Region during the last five years;

(b) whether the Government are aware that most of the funds allocated for the region are misutilised or diverted to other heads;

(c) if so, the number of such cases reported during the said period;

(d) whether the Government have made any investigation into misutilisation/diversion of funds;

(e) if so, the findings thereof and the action taken against the persons/officials found responsible for the same; and

(f) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to check the recurrence of such practice?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) According to the information available, expenditure incurred under State Plan approved by Planning Commission for the States in the North Eastern Region comprising of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura during Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) was of the order of Rs. 19784.82 crores (Provisional). Additionally, expenditure incurred from North Eastern Council during the period is Rs. 1937.71 crore, from Non-lapsable Pool of Resources is Rs. 1318.66 crore and from Central Ministries is Rs. 17735.55 crore.

(b) No Sir. However, as most of North Eastern States have been facing large Revenue Deficits in the Budgets, Plan funds including funds under Centrally Sponsored Schemes have in some cases been diverted to meet emergent non Plan needs.

(c) While there have been allegations with regard to irregularities, it is not possible to quantify the magnitude of seepage of development funds.

(d) and (e) The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India conducts regular audit of certain selected

programmes and activities of the Government. Besides, Department of Development of North Eastern Region has also requested to him to conduct audit of some of the ongoing projects. The necessary action for irregularities is taken by the State Government against defaulting officials and it is a continuous process. As far as action for diversion of funds is concerned, releases to Centrally Sponsored Schemes are dependent on utilization certificates from State Governments. Any diversion of funds meant for these schemes result in subsequent releases to the concerned States being curtailed. The only effective cure to prevent such diversion is for the States to ensure that Revenue deficits are wiped out.

(f) The State Governments are accountable to their legislature for proper utilization of funds through State Audit Report prepared by the C&AG of India under Article 151(2) of the Constitution. Further, Planning Commission has initiated a system of Quarterly Performance Review (QPR) of Plan schemes during 2002-03. Adviser State Plan (North East) takes these meetings to monitor the progress of all schemes/projects taken up under the Annual Plan. On review, appropriate measures are suggested to improve Plan performance of the states. To ensure proper utilization of funds, the system of monitoring, sanctioning, release of funds and implementation has been tightened. Field inspections of works have been intensified and the Department of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) has also commenced monitoring of on-going projects. The State Governments have also been advised to ensure that programme/project specific funds are released to

implementing agencies promptly and regular monitoring of projects is undertaken. The second and subsequent installments are released only after receipt of utilization certificates.

Non-Delivery of Money Orders

*210. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI:
SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of users of money-order service during the last three years;

(b) whether complaints about the non-delivery of money-orders on time are on the increase;

(c) if so, the number of complaints received from July 1, 2001 to December 31, 2002;

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to put the entire money-order service via satellite?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) to (e) The number of Money Order users during the last three years is given below:—

Year	Number of users of money order service all over the country (In millions)	Total Number of Money Order complaints received	% receipt of complaints w.r.t. total Money Orders handled
1999-2000	113.73	4,22,408	0.371
2000-2001	109.52	4,28,655	0.391
2001-2002	112.18	5,06,388	0.451

There has been a marginal increase in the number of complaints received about non-payment of money orders on time. Considering the volume of money order traffic, the % of complaints received is nominal as shown above.

The number of complaints received from 1.7.2001 to 31.12.2002 about non-delivery of money orders on time is 4,22,522.

As soon as such complaints are received, enquiries are taken up simultaneously with the remitting/paying offices immediately. In case no reply is received within 10 days from these offices, duplicate Money Orders are ordered to be issued for payment.

The Department has placed a network of 77 Slow Speed VSATs and 150 High Speed VSATs for transmission of money order via Satellite. Fresh Application Software to transmit money orders has been

ordered for testing, and after its successful testing and commissioning, the transmission of money orders through VSATs will be increased in a phased manner.

[Translation]

Non-Availability of Medicines

*211. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO:
SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that there is acute shortage of essential medicines in Allopathic and Ayurvedic CGHS dispensaries/hospitals in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to make available medicines in these dispensaries/hospitals;

(d) the worth of medicines bought by the CGHS beneficiaries directly from the authorised chemists during the last three years; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to ensure quality and availability of medicines in the CGHS dispensaries/hospitals?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) No Sir. By and large, commonly used day-to-day medicines are available in the CGHS allopathic/Ayurvedic dispensaries in the country. Allopathic medicines prescribed by the specialists, which are not available in the CGHS dispensaries, are procured from authorized local chemists against individual prescription of the patients. In the event of non-availability of non-formulary Ayurvedic medicines in the CGHS dispensaries, which are prescribed by the Authorized Physician, the beneficiary is advised to procure the medicines from the open market and get reimbursement from the Government.

(b) In view of (a) above, the question does not arise.

(c) and (d) Bulk purchase of generic drugs, as per formulary and rate contract prevalent in Government of National Capital Territory (GNCT) of Delhi, are being undertaken to ensure availability and supply of generic drugs. These drugs are pre-tested for their quality. Similarly, bulk purchase of proprietary drugs are also being undertaken directly from the manufacturing firms after

negotiation of the rates with them to derive maximum advantage/concession from them. This procedure, apart from being cost effective, ensures quality of medicines supplied.

(d) CGHS beneficiaries do not buy medicines directly from the authorized local chemists appointed under CGHS.

Land Line Connections of MTNL

*212. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of land line connections provided by the MTNL and BSNL has declined;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Mumbai-Circle of MTNL has shown an all time heavy-fall in the allotment of land line connections during the current financial year as compared to the last financial year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) No, Sir. The total number of land-line connections of BSNL and MTNL have increased from 3,34,01,192 and 45,43,147 as on 1.4.2002 to 3,50,70,616 and 46,17,902 as on 31.1.2003 respectively.

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

(c) No, Sir. The land line connections in MTNL, Mumbai including wireless in local loop connections as on 1.4.2002 & 31.01.2003 were 24,38,339 and 24,51,129 respectively, indicating a net increase of 12,790 connections during ten months of the current financial year.

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

[English]

Downsizing of High Commission in Islamabad

*213. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian High Commission in Islamabad has been downsized;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) Following the terrorist attack on India's Parliament on December 13, 2001, and with continued indication that Pakistan was unwilling to take more than just cosmetic steps against terrorist groups operating from its territory and territories under its control, on 27th December 2001, India decided to take some steps in addition to those that had already been taken. It was announced that the strength of the respective High Commissions in the two countries would be reduced by 50%, i.e. from a total of 110 to 55.

Subsequently, on 22nd January 2003, four officials of the Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi, were declared *persona non grata* as they were found indulging in activities incompatible with their official status. It was conveyed to Pakistan that no replacements would be accepted for the four expelled Pakistani officials, thus bringing down the strength of the Pakistan High Commission, New Delhi to 51. In a clear act of retaliation, on 23rd January 2003, Pakistan ordered three diplomats and one staff member of the Indian High Commission, Islamabad to leave the country on baseless and concocted grounds, effecting a reciprocal reduction in the strength of the High Commission of India in Islamabad.

On 8th February 2003, Pak Charge d' Affaires and four other members of the Pakistan high Commission were expelled on account of their activities which were found to be incompatible with their official status. It was conveyed to Pakistan that Government of India did not intend any downgradation in the level of representation of the Charge d'Affaires but would not accept any replacement for the other four expelled officials. In yet another retaliatory action, Pakistan also asked for the withdrawal of India's Cd'A and four other members of High Commission of India, Islamabad including a reciprocal cut in the staff strength of the High Commission at Islamabad. The respective strength of the two High Commissions stands reduced to 47.

The steps taken in the context of the strength of the High Commission of Pakistan in India were a considered decision in view of Pakistan's sponsorship and support for cross border terrorism, and activities of officials of the Pakistan High Commission which were incompatible with their official status.

Maintenance of National Highways

*214. DR. V. SAROJA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether schemes for the maintenance of National Highways on Build, Operate and Transfer Basis (BOT) have been formulated;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of the National Highways which are proposed to be covered under the said schemes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) At present, no such scheme has been formulated.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Spread of Diseases

*215. SHRI A. NARENDRA:
SHRI RAM SINGH KASWAN:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether diseases like Hepatitis-B, AIDS and TB have again started spreading rapidly in the country;

(b) if so, the comparative figures of deaths due to the said diseases during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(c) the number of persons affected by the aforesaid diseases during the above period;

(d) the total funds allocated for the eradication of the above diseases;

(e) the total funds spent by each State on each centrally sponsored health programme out of the total funds allocated during the above said period;

(f) the total amount of assistance received from the foreign countries and World Health Organisation to tackle the AIDS and TB during the said period; and

(g) the steps contemplated by the Government to check the further spread of these diseases?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (g) The

details of cases/deaths due to Hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS and TB during the last three years are given at statements-I to IV respectively.

The National T.B. Control Programme (NTCP) has been in operation in the country since 1952. To achieve a cure rate of 85% of new sputum positive cases and to detect at least 70% of such cases, revised National T.B. Control Programme (RNTCP), which is an application of the WHO recommended Directly Observed Treatment—Short Course (DOTS) Strategy, is implemented in the country in a phased manner. At present, 570 million population has been covered under RNTCP and it is envisaged to cover a population of 850 million by the year 2004 and the entire country by year 2005. Under the Programme, 100% requirement of anti-TB drugs and Binocular Microscopes are provided as commodity grant by the Centre to all the States/UTs. For undertaking various activities for implementation of RNTCP, cash assistance is released to States/District TB Societies. The Programme is rigorously monitored through quarterly performance reports. The details of funds allocated and utilized by the states under the National T.B. Control Programme are given at Statement-V enclosed. The World Bank has provided Rs. 604 crores for the project period from May 1997 to September 2004, Danish International Development agency has provided Rs. 31.95 crores for the project period December, 1997 to June 2003 and the Department for International Development has provided Rs. 109.93 crores for the project period April, 1998 to October, 2005. World Health Organization is also providing an assistance of US \$ 100,00 for TB during the biennium 2002-2003.

In order to combat the problem of AIDS, Government has launched a comprehensive AIDS prevention and control programme, which is a 100% centrally sponsored scheme implemented in all States/UTs through States/UTs AIDS Control Societies. The main components of the Programme consist of:—

- Reducing the spread of HIV in groups at high risk by identification of target population and providing peer counseling, condom promotion, and treatment of sexually transmitted infections.
- Preventive intervention for the general population by Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and awareness campaign, provision of voluntary testing and counseling, safe blood transfusion services and prevention of occupational exposure.

- Providing financial assistance for opportunistic infections, home and community based care.
- Strengthening effectiveness and technical, managerial, financial sustainability at National, State and Municipal levels.
- Promoting collaboration amongst public, private and voluntary sector.

The funds allocated and utilized by the states under National AIDS Control Programme are given in detail at Statement-VI enclosed. An amount of Rs. 959 crores is being provided by World Bank out of an outlay of Rs. 1425 crores for NACO project-phase-II for the period 1999 to 2004. The rest is being provided by two bilateral agencies viz. US AID Assistance (Rs. 166 crores) and DFID Assistance (Rs. 104 crores) and domestic component. World Health Organization is also providing an assistance of US\$ 200,000 for AIDS during the current biennium 2002-2003.

Hepatitis-B spreads due to unsafe sex, unsafe blood transfusion, unsafe injections etc. and from mother to child. Hepatitis-B is preventable by ensuring safe blood transfusion, safe sex, safe injection practices etc. Vaccine for Hepatitis-B is also available. Following measures have been taken to prevent Hepatitis-B:—

- Guidelines have been issued for mandatory testing of blood in all blood banks.
- Promotion of safe sex under National Aids Control Programme is advocated.
- Health awareness campaigns under National Aids Control Programme are held.
- Guidelines have been issued to State Health authorities for use of separate sterile syringes and needles for each injection.
- A Pilot Project to immunize children against Hepatitis-B in selected cities/districts has been launched under National Immunization Programme.
- Central Government hospital personnel at high risk are being immunized against Hepatitis-B. State Governments have also been advised to take similar steps:

A sum of Rs. 46.10 lakhs has been released to 15 cities for implementation of the Pilot Project on Hepatitis-B.

Statement I*Reported Cases and Deaths due to Hepatitis-B*

S.No.	Name of the States/UTs	1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002	
		Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	36925	113	27595	114	24530	38
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	**	**	**	**	**	**NR
3.	Assam	**	**	**	**	**	**NR
4.	Bihar	**	**	**	**	**	**NR
5.	Chhattisgarh	**	**	**	**	**	**NR
6.	Goa	15†	0	229	0	124	0
7.	Gujarat	2676	9	3982	30	3462	19
8.	Haryana	1733	14	1086	6	2731	10
9.	Himachal Pradesh	1843	2	1464	1	1275	0
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	6956	2	6171	0	4226	0
11.	Jharkhand	**	**	**	**	**	**NR
12.	Karnataka	9150	69	24571	91	17689	140
13.	Kerala	7197	4	5521	8	3997	4
14.	Madhya Pradesh	3928	44	6620	11	3267	10
15.	Maharashtra	29221	297	40962	244	39911	234
16.	Manipur	690	3	728	7	1558	0
17.	Meghalaya	374	5	301	1	500	8
18.	Mizoram	598	6	943	2	1183	11
19.	Nagaland	36	0	408	0	144	0
20.	Orissa	10338	146	14011	107	7334	38
21.	Punjab	2347	6	1796	1	4881	19
22.	Rajasthan	2559	48	1601	39	2955	89
23.	Sikkim	511	2	594	5	409	1
24.	Tamil Nadu	2109	28	1740	4	1632	1
25.	Tripura	122	0	113	8	1784	9
26.	Uttaranchal	**	**	**	**	**	**NR
27.	Uttar Pradesh	2120	45	988	24	1885	14
28.	West Bengal	5867	351	5831	157	6303	265

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
29.	A & N Islands	247	3	252	8	536	2
30.	Chandigarh	234	6	219	3	310	8
31.	D & N Haveli	3	0	**	**	**	**NR
32.	Daman & Diu	37	0	41	0	6	0
33.	Delhi	2929	97	4077	162	3159	84
34.	Lakshadweep	319	1	258	0	71	1
35.	Pondicherry	578	21	932	5	654	9
Total		131798	1322	153034	1038	138516	1014

**Break up is not available

NR—Not reported

Source : Deptt. of Family Welfare.

Statement II

Death due to HIV/AIDS during the last three years

S.No.	State/UT	1999	2000	2001
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	—	—	53
2.	Assam	—	1	—
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	—	—	—
4.	A & N Islands	—	7	2
5.	Bihar	5	7	1
6.	Chandigarh	—	13	29
7.	Punjab	—	—	—
8.	Delhi	—	24	27
9.	Daman & Diu	—	—	—
10.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	2	—	—
11.	Goa	—	3	15
12.	Gujarat	12	—	20
13.	Haryana	—	5	—
14.	Himachal Pradesh	6	—	—
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	—	—	—
16.	Karnataka	20	19	27

1	2	3	4	5
17.	Kerala	13	—	—
18.	Lakshadweep	4	—	—
19.	Madhya Pradesh	—	50	5
20.	Maharashtra	80	77	176
21.	Manipur	2	17	50
22.	Mizoram	—	7	—
23.	Meghalaya	1	—	—
24.	Nagaland	12	25	28
25.	Orissa	—	—	—
26.	Pondicherry	71	—	—
27.	Rajasthan	—	—	—
28.	Sikkim	1	—	—
29.	Tamil Nadu	—	119	249
30.	Tripura	—	—	—
31.	Uttar Pradesh	—	4	15
32.	West Bengal	—	—	68
Total		229	378	765

Source: NACO

Statement III*Statement indicating reported AIDS cases during the last three years (1999 to 2001)*

S.No.	State	1999	2000	2001
1	2	3	4	5
1.	A & N Islands	0	9	8
2.	Andhra Pradesh	2	485	732
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0
4.	Assam	11	62	30
5.	Bihar	0	38	63
6.	Chandigarh	124	114	189
7.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	0	0

1	2	3	4	5
8.	Daman & Diu	0	0	0
9.	Delhi	0	64	358
10.	Goa	7	10	46
11.	Gujarat	1	245	877
12.	Haryana	0	47	141
13.	Himachal Pradesh	16	15	51
14.	Jammu & Kashmir	0	0	0
15.	Karnataka	47	541	516
16.	Kerala	0	56	105
17.	Lakshadweep	0	0	0
18.	Madhya Pradesh	116	294	139
19.	Maharashtra	64	348	2728
20.	Manipur	61	364	307
21.	Meghalaya	0	0	0
22.	Mizoram	7	3	5
23.	Nagaland	19	51	131
24.	Orissa	0	52	28
25.	Pondicherry	0	0	0
26.	Punjab	52	31	4
27.	Rajasthan	27	106	136
28.	Sikkim	0	0	2
29.	Tamil Nadu	2730	4206	6484
30.	Tripura	0	0	0
31.	Uttar Pradesh	41	93	202
32.	West Bengal	0	0	668
33.	Ahmedabad Munci. Corp.	0	0	189
Total		3325	7234	14139

Statement IV*Reported cases and deaths due to Tuberculosis during 1999, 2000 & 2001*

S.No.	State/UTs	1999		2000		2001	
		Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths	Cases	Deaths
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	115088	957	209902	1359	181172	1299
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	—	—	—	—	—	NR
3.	Assam	—	—	—	—	—	NR
4.	Bihar	—	—	—	—	—	NR
5.	Chhattisgarh	NA	NA	—	—	—	NA
6.	Goa	7588	53	8096	87	6498	67
7.	Gujarat	36101	84	12587	83	16400	84
8.	Haryana	36235	267	47985	236	34900	226
9.	Himachal Pradesh	12732	232	9791	211	8192	201
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	3432	0	4055	0	4109	0
11.	Jharkhand	NA	NA	—	—	NR	NR
12.	Karnataka	63495	907	71024	993	70738	906
13.	Kerala	35987	194	35254	156	26917	229
14.	Madhya Pradesh	25631	41	32335	91	21415	80
15.	Maharashtra	84215	716	76642	807	72495	891
16.	Manipur	2399	28	910	21	568	18
17.	Meghalaya	2204	2	1687	58	2291	59
18.	Mizoram	1198	13	1097	8	1208	27
19.	Nagaland	886	0	312	3	322	0
20.	Orissa	39190	376	24626	323	17851	218
21.	Punjab	14912	71	8225	23	10520	167
22.	Rajasthan	54776	287	38605	306	54413	393
23.	Sikkim	2100	21	2141	47	1623	34
24.	Tamil Nadu	60569	358	57693	200	71568	160
25.	Tripura	0	0	0	0	130	4
26.	Uttar Pradesh	58518	250	61692	168	70816	91
27.	Uttaranchal	NA	NA	—	—	NR	NR
28.	West Bengal	37546	960	72457	1088	104967	1295

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
29.	A & N Islands	879	22	966	24	1488	22
30.	Chandigarh	624	48	734	42	840	45
31.	D & N Haveli	79	1	—	—	—	NR
32.	Daman & Diu	1328	11	—	3	180	1
33.	Delhi	19680	688	1424	1048	15065	657
34.	Lakshadweep	84	0	28106	0	26	0
35.	Pondicherry	18588	69	25712	124	27252	120
Total		736064	6656	834084	7509	823964	7294

Source : TB Division

Statement V*Allocation and Expenditure during the last three years under National TB Control Programme*

(Rupees in Lakhs)

Sr.No.	Name of the State/UT	1999-2000		2000-2001		2001-2002	
		Allocation	Exp.	Allocation	Exp.	Allocation	Exp.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	478.16	375.20	442.13	888.93	1200.00	1509.35
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	2.52	18.41	94.10	83.13	119.42	87.87
3.	Assam	113.04	211.01	294.32	162.29	212.38	191.32
4.	Bihar	1044.68	647.22	1015.06	405.19	700.05	401.60
5.	Goa	3.14	2.88	12.72	12.70	15.55	9.69
6.	Gujarat	1192.41	419.34	867.72	704.86	810.07	457.64
7.	Haryana	78.38	205.45	233.31	108.03	195.23	155.09
8.	Himachal Pradesh	132.37	105.88	114.84	324.13	183.57	142.12
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	36.94	63.26	79.64	111.47	73.42	76.26
10.	Karnataka	694.67	349.61	661.83	478.92	632.73	519.29
11.	Kerala	877.25	170.59	599.18	391.29	687.23	441.73
12.	Madhya Pradesh	414.19	622.91	754.83	272.40	658.38	412.31
13.	Maharashtra	844.72	1049.55	1257.08	1557.36	1683.61	1144.82
14.	Manipur	31.36	29.53	29.66	154.24	100.47	86.19
15.	Meghalaya	8.52	15.49	19.46	9.37	19.59	12.69

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
16.	Mizoram	3.45	5.16	7.47	7.72	14.17	15.50
17.	Nagaland	2.74	15.83	13.64	61.69	99.36	95.44
18.	Orissa	322.28	330.27	449.33	923.79	600.00	528.04
19.	Punjab	95.07	64.37	226.14	92.23	281.74	234.87
20.	Rajasthan	393.62	808.40	973.83	952.45	1072.53	730.57
21.	Sikkim	1.88	8.15	4.37	48.52	31.82	30.72
22.	Tamil Nadu	654.19	598.95	1117.60	856.46	999.81	666.27
23.	Tripura	13.23	21.24	29.81	23.38	30.52	36.09
24.	Uttar Pradesh	889.02	1342.46	1670.68	586.99	1402.20	1222.44
25.	West Bengal	2063.34	869.16	1126.85	984.51	1109.92	644.29
26.	Delhi	0.00	294.70	192.23	352.06	228.75	159.51
27.	Pondicherry	2.75	3.12	15.38	3.24	11.67	3.89
28.	Andaman & Nicobar	1.24	1.17	2.54	0.96	1.53	0.58
29.	Chandigarh	3.44	3.53	7.27	19.03	12.84	8.38
30.	D & N Haveli	0.66	0.63	0.07	0.68	0.04	0.30
31.	Daman & Diu	0.49	0.45	1.46	0.54	0.88	0.30
32.	Lakshadweep	0.25	0.23	5.45	2.04	3.28	0.00
33.	Jharkhand	0.00	0.00	0.00	17.40	55.13	53.71
34.	Uttaranchal	0.00	0.00	0.00	9.67	15.56	15.23
35.	Chhattisgarh	0.00	0.00	0.00	18.36	36.54	35.60
Total		10400.00	8654.15	12320.00	10626.00	13300.00	10129.73
HQ		100.00	99.89	180.00	249.00	300.00	70.27
Grant Total		10500.00	8754.04	12500.00	10875.00	13600.00	10200.00

Source : TB Division

Statement VI*National AIDS Control Project-Phase II—Position of Release of funds and its utilisation*

S.No.	State/UT	Release during 1999-2000	Expdr. during 1999-2000	Release during 2000-01	Expdr. during 2000-01	Release during 2001-02	Expdr. during 2001-02
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1219.67	1003.93	824.50	823.95	850.00	1163.33
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	159.00	103.07	111.00	140.83	214.88	161.91

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3.	Assam	322.00	314.78	375.00	346.27	653.80	444.95
4.	Bihar	55.00	124.03	196.00	105.84	809.50	1017.85
5.	Goa	98.00	69.12	72.73	92.78	99.00	97.32
6.	Gujarat	721.00	580.65	347.17	264.20	450.00	255.15
7.	Haryana	270.00	167.57	246.50	321.05	266.00	207.76
8.	Himachal Pradesh	318.00	237.02	262.50	266.68	308.50	276.81
9.	J & K	25.00	16.40	152.00	69.03	244.50	200.40
10.	Karnataka	801.67	555.03	398.65	533.57	785.15	783.35
11.	Kerala	280.00	301.65	350.63	286.54	368.00	260.71
12.	Madhya Pradesh	352.31	455.43	542.00	361.49	780.50	471.12
13.	Maharashtra	998.35	1138.03	852.00	832.95	550.00	235.03
14.	Manipur	352.38	561.89	415.30	145.94	708.15	656.03
15.	Meghalaya	70.14	43.88	87.50	50.50	224.93	64.18
16.	Mizoram	168.00	170.55	179.00	177.46	246.70	266.85
17.	Nagaland	380.00	455.23	250.50	187.39	635.50	568.54
18.	Orissa	200.00	34.47	358.50	203.53	200.00	211.54
19.	Punjab	312.39	172.37	321.50	177.55	266.50	185.62
20.	Rajasthan	150.00	136.26	380.00	232.68	317.50	297.01
21.	Sikkim	25.00	44.37	66.00	45.50	120.02	73.95
22.	Tamil Nadu	883.09	1416.71	1108.30	755.03	1393.50	1309.87
23.	Tripura	50.00	36.59	92.00	76.73	196.67	129.01
24.	Uttar Pradesh	851.00	343.77	1175.00	448.53	1465.65	1971.99
25.	West Bengal	425.00	621.80	643.15	544.60	1059.50	1221.56
26.	Delhi	283.00	383.39	239.00	168.15	334.00	329.46
27.	Pondicherry	25.00	35.78	21.50	26.81	54.00	48.98
28.	A & N Islands	50.00	52.27	66.44	53.89	95.50	79.43
29.	Chandigarh	115.00	123.38	93.11	106.32	152.65	134.60
30.	D & N Haveli	25.00	6.16	9.00	14.80	26.00	21.62
31.	Daman & Diu	95.00	26.02	9.00	72.76	31.00	46.25
32.	Lakshadweep	25.00	1.04	9.16	18.84	29.50	22.62
33.	MDACS, Mumbai	670.00	718.92	431.65	408.78	585.65	410.44
34.	Ahm'bad MC	75.00	38.89	84.61	65.14	58.30	102.90

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
35.	Chennai MC	125.00	29.21	101.50	28.24	62.45	105.95
36.	Uttaranchal	—	—	—	—	98.00	0.00
37.	Chhattisgarh	—	—	—	—	129.50	95.64
38.	Jharkhand	—	—	—	—	156.00	0.00
	Total	10975.00	10519.66	10872.40	8454.35	15027.00	13930.73

Position of utilisation of funds is based on reimbursement claims submitted by SACS.

Source NACO

Condition of CGHS Dispensaries/Hospitals

*216. SHRI SAIDUZZAMA:
DR. M.P. JAISWAL:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the pathetic condition including shortage of doctors in CGHS dispensaries/hospitals in the country particularly in Delhi;

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

(c) whether the Government are contemplating to revamp functioning of CGHS dispensaries/hospitals;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (e) No, Sir. The CGHS dispensaries/hospitals in the country are not in a pathetic condition. As far as the availability of doctors in concerned, nearly 90% of the sanctioned posts are filled up. As regards availability of medicines also, adequate number of generic and proprietary items have been made available in the dispensaries. Besides the medicines which are not available at the dispensaries are made available to the beneficiaries through authorized Local Chemists.

[Translation]

MPLAD Scheme

*217. SHRI RAJO SINGH:
SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number and nature of complaints received from MPs from each State regarding the amount spent and sub-standard works done under the MPLAD Scheme during the last three years;

(b) the details of the action taken in this regard;

(c) whether the funds allocated under MPLAD Scheme have been fully utilised by MPs;

(d) if not, the details of the funds allocated to the MPs and the percentage of funds spent by them during the last three years, State-wise; and

(e) the reasons for delay, if any, in the implementation of MPLAD Scheme and the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) The state-wise number of complaints received from the MPs in respect of implementation of the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme [MPLADS] is given below:—

Uttar Pradesh	—	13
Bihar	—	03
Maharashtra	—	05
Tamil Nadu	—	02
West Bengal	—	01
Rajasthan	—	04
Kerala	—	03
Orissa	—	02
Jharkhand	—	01

The nature of complaints relates to sub-standard execution of works, delays in release of funds, delays in sanction of projects and mis-utilization of funds etc.

(b) As and when any complaint is received either from an MP or from any other quarters, it is examined with due care and appropriate remedial action is taken if it pertains to the Central Government. In other cases, the complaints are referred to the District Heads and the State Governments concerned and they are advised to take immediate remedial action.

(c) No Sir.

(d) The detailed and updated information relating to cumulative entitlement, sanctioned amount and expenditure position, M.P. wise, State-wise may be seen from the Monthly Report for February, 2003 kept in the Parliament Library. The information is also available on the internet website mplads.nic.in.

(e) The reasons for delay in implementation of MPLADS are:

- (i) Delay in submission of recommendation of works by the MPs to the District Head;
- (ii) Frequent changes of works by the MPs;
- (iii) Delay in processing of recommendations received from MPs by the District Authorities;
- (iv) Delay in preparation of estimates by the concerned agencies;
- (v) Delay in issue of financial sanction by the District Heads;
- (vi) Delay in transfer of funds from one district to another;
- (vii) Non-submission of expenditure statement by District Heads to the Central Government resulting in delay in release of funds;
- (viii) Non-release of funds in time to the implementing agencies by the District Heads;
- (ix) Non-availability of/delay in getting possession of land; and
- (x) Non-compliance of time-frame by the implementing agencies;

The steps taken to expedite the implementation of works under the MPLADS include:

- (i) Advice to District Collectors to process and sanction the works recommended by MPs to the extent of their yearly entitlement of funds without waiting for actual release of funds;
- (ii) Holding of regular review meetings with the MPs to sort out problems and to ensure project-wise allocation of funds as per requirement;
- (iii) Request to MPs to give their recommendations will in advance in a phased manner and not to cancel or change the works which have already been sanctioned;
- (iv) Request to the State Governments to monitor the programme more intensively; and
- (v) Organization of workshops and state-level review meetings to have better interaction with MPs.

[English]

Telecom Sector

*218. SHRI C.N. SINGH:
SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India is one of the fastest growing telecommunication market in the World;
- (b) if so, the total number of landline and mobile subscribers at present of BSNL and MTNL;
- (c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to revamp the functioning of the telecom sector;
- (d) whether the Government are aware of the growing imbalance in the enrolment of subscribers of BSNL between various States;
- (e) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (f) the steps taken to remove this imbalance?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The total number of subscribers as on 31.01.2003 on BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd.) and MTNL (Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.) is given us under:

BNSL				MTNL			
Fixed	WLL*	Mobile	Total	Fixed	WLL*	Mobile	Total
34623307	447309	1283365	36353981	4536457	81445	240984	4858886

*Wireless in Local Loop.

(c) The following steps are being taken by the Government to revamp the telecom sector:—

1. Focus on introduction of wireless technologies in the customer access network.
2. Building a modern and efficient telecommunications infrastructure to meet the convergence of telecom, IT and media.
3. Strengthening research and development efforts in the country.
4. Transformation of telecommunication sector to a greater competitive environment, providing equal opportunities and level playing field for all players.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. Growth of DELs (Direct Exchange Lines) in an area depends upon demand which in turn depends upon economic activity, literacy rate, commercial activities and per capita income. As a result of these factors, the enrolment of subscribers has grown at different rates in various States.

(f) To remove the imbalance, BSNL has planned enhanced efforts for the States with teledensity below the national average, subject to the availability of demand and resources.

Losses of Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd.

*219. SHRI CHANDRA VIJAY SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd. has suffered huge losses due to delay in communication of revised rates of nuclear fuel;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to prevent such a recurrence along with the action taken those found guilty in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION, AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF

ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

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

[*Translation*]

Vacant Posts in I.T. Sector

*220. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indians having high technical qualifications are migrating to industrial countries to cater to the demand of skilled labourers in the Information Technology Sector in those countries;

(b) if so, the extent of loss caused by brain drain;

(c) whether several posts in the Information Technology Sector are vacant as a result thereof;

(d) if so, the details thereof, category-wise; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to fill up the vacant posts?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Indian Software companies and technical workers undertake onsite projects and jobs for overseas companies in industrialized and developing countries to meet requirements of clients and execute specific projects.

(b) No such assessment has been made by Government.

(c) According to NASSCOM (National Association of Software Services Companies), as India produces large number of IT professionals every year, there is no shortage of skill sets within the country. The Government does not monitor vacant slots in the private sector.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[English]

Nominations to Central Council of Homoeopathy

2059. PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether an elected member of the Central Council of Homoeopathy can also be nominated to that body as per HCC Act, 1973;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there has been any instance when an elected member was nominated to CCH even while enjoying the position as an elected member;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action proposed to be taken by the Government to rectify this anomalous situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) According to Section 5 (2) of the Homoeopathic Central Council Act, 1973 no person may at the same time serve as a member in more than one capacity.

(c) to (e) One instance has come to notice. Action is being taken to rectify this situation.

Elections to Central Council of Homoeopathy

2060. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of Members of the Central Council of Homoeopathy are continuing in office even after expiry of their terms;

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

(c) the steps the Government propose to take to conduct elections/nominations to fill above vacancies; and

(d) the details of the time schedule for the above elections/nominations procedure to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The term of a member of Central Council of Homoeopathy is five years or till the successor is elected/nominated, whichever, is longer. The members are continuing as per provision of Section 7 (1) of HCC Act, 1973.

(c) and (d) Election process has already been initiated to reconstitute the council. The nominations will be made as per provision of Section 3 (1) (C) of HCC Act, 1973 after completing the election from majority of the States.

[Translation]

Shooting Competition

2061. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to organise shooting competitions in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of countries likely to participate therein; and

(d) the amount proposed to be spent thereon?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA): (a) to (d) The Government does not organize competitions for sports. Such competitions are organized by the concerned National Sports Federation. National Rifle Association of India (NRAI) is organizing International Shooting Sports Federation World Cup for shot gun events, 2003 and 2003-Asian Clay Shooting Championship in New Delhi from March 15 to 22 and March 23 to 29, 2003, respectively. ISSF World Cup, 2003 is also a qualification competition for Olympic Games, 2003. According to information received from NRAI, shooters from the following countries are likely to participate in these competitions:

ISSF World Cup

Ukraine, Poland, Brazil, Finland, Germany, Great Britain, Solvenia, Netherlands, Italy, Qatar, China, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Czech Republic, Spain, Slovakia, Oman, Fiji, Hungary, Ireland, Bulgaria, UAE, Canada, Croatia, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Thailand, Cyprus, Philippines, Iran, New Zealand, USA and Egypt.

Asian Clay Shooting Championship

Japan, Sri Lanka, UAE, Qatar, Hong Kong, China, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Iran.

As per budget estimates submitted by NRAI, an amount of Rs. 40,34,200/- is likely to be spent on organization of each of these events. This Ministry has approved organization of these events with financial assistance of Rs. 10 lakhs for each event, as admissible under the related scheme. Out of this assistance,

Rs. 7.50 lakhs has been released to NRAI, as advance grant for each competition.

[*English*]

CGHS Recognition to Cancer Institute

2062. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any representation regarding CGHS recognition to Cancer Institute, Adayar, Chennai for treatment of CGHS beneficiaries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Cancer Institute, Adayar, Chennai could to be recognised earlier under CGHS, Chennai as it did not accept the CGHS rates for various medical procedures/tests/investigations. However, the Govt. has received a representation from the hospital for reconsidering their application for recognition under CGHS Chennai. The request is under consideration.

Disinvestment of Cochin Shipyard

2063. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to disinvest Cochin Shipyard in Kerala; and

(b) if so, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) The Disinvestment Commission has recommended disinvestment of a minimum of 51% shareholding of Government in Cochin Shipyard Ltd. Government is yet to take a decision on the recommendation of the Commission.

NH-36

2064. DR. JAYANTA RONGPI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether NH-36 passes through Karbi Anglong;

(b) if so, whether any proposal has been received from Assam for the improvement of the said stretch;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government propose to construct a bridge over live Longnit alongwith the widening of NH-36;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the time by which the above works are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) and (f) The construction of Lungit Bridge is already in progress and the work is targeted for completion by October, 2003.

[*Translation*]

Telecom Advisory Committees

2065. SHRI MANSINH PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Telecom Advisory Committees in the country, State-wise;

(b) the number of persons in each Telecom Advisory Committee alongwith their names and the areas they represent; and

(c) the criterion laid down for nominations on the Committees alongwith the objectives thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) There are three hundred sixty (360) Telecom Advisory Committees (TACs) in the country at present Details are given in enclosed Statement I.

(b) Number of members in each TAC is given in enclosed Statement II. Names and the areas they represent are being compiled and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) Nomination of the members in TAC is at the discretion of the Hon'ble Minister of Communications and Information Technology after taking into consideration the

recommendations of elected representatives. All the Hon'ble Members of Parliament in the Telecom District are nominated as members by virtue of their office in one of the TACs falling within their constituency/state. The objectives of the TACs are as under:—

- (i) To discuss methods to bring the users of telephone services and the services providers viz. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited into closer relationship.
- (ii) To give public the confidence that their grievances are properly represented and attended to.

Statement I

Number of TACs

Sl.No.	Name of the Circle/ Telephone District	Number of TACs
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	22
2.	Assam	7
3.	Bihar	17
4.	Jharkhand	6
5.	Gujarat	18
6.	Himachal Pradesh	6
7.	Haryana	9
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	5
9.	Kerala	11
10.	Karnataka	19
11.	Maharashtra	30
12.	Madhya Pradesh	34
13.	Chhattisgarh	6
14.	North East-I	3
15.	North East-II	3
16.	Orissa	13
17.	Punjab	10
18.	Rajasthan	24
19.	Tamil Nadu	17

1	2	3
20.	Uttar Pradesh (East)	33
21.	Uttar Pradesh (West)	16
22.	Uttaranchal	6
23.	West Bengal	14
24.	Mumbai	10
25.	Kolkata	4
26.	Delhi	9
27.	Chennai	4
28.	Andaman and Nicobar Islands (UT)	1
29.	Chandigarh (UT)	1
30.	Lakshadweep (UT)	1
31.	Pondicherry (UT)	1
Total		360

Statement II

Number of Members in Each TAC

Sl.No.	Name of the TAC	Nominated Members
1	2	3
STATE : ANDHRA PRADESH		
1.	Anantpur (Guntakal)	17
2.	Kurnool	16
3.	Medak (Sangareddy)	14
4.	Mehboobnagar	25
5.	Malgonda	20
6.	Nellore	14
7.	Nizamabad	19
8.	Prakasam (Ongole)	16
9.	Visakhapatnam	22
10.	W. Godavary (Eluru)	17
11.	Warrangal	12
12.	Chittoor (Tirupathi)	26

1	2	3
13.	Vizianagaram	14
14.	Adilabad	12
15.	Srikakulam	28
16.	Cuddapah	13
17.	East Godavari (RMY)	22
18.	Guntur	26
19.	Hyderabad	44
20.	Karimnagar	19
21.	Khammam	11
22.	Krishna (VW)	27
	Total	434

STATE : ASSAM

1.	Cachar (Silchar)	20
2.	Kokrajhar (Bongaigaon)	26
3.	Kamrup (Guwahati)	26
4.	Lakhimpur (Dibrugarh)	18
5.	Sibsagar (Jorhat)	22
6.	Tejpur (Sonitpur)	15
7.	Nagaon	15
	Total	142

STATE : BIHAR

1.	Darbhanga	22
2.	Arrah	22
3.	Hajipur	5
4.	Sasaram	16
5.	Khagaria	17
6.	Samastipur	11
7.	Motihari	16
8.	Bettiah (W. Chamapran)	16
9.	Kishanganj	5
10.	Gaya	37
11.	Muzaffarpur	33

1	2	3
12.	Patna	59
13.	Katihar	30
14.	Bhagalpur	14
15.	Chhapra	28
16.	Munger	24
17.	Saharsa	21
	Total	376

STATE : CHHATTISGARH

1.	Bilaspur	25
2.	Durg	26
3.	Raipur	20
4.	Raigarh	17
5.	Bastar (Jagdalpur)	13
6.	Sarguja (Ambikapur)	12
	Total	113

STATE : GUJARAT

1.	Ahmedabad	52
2.	Panchmahal (Godhra)	12
3.	Rajkot	18
4.	Sabarkanta (HMT Nagar)	9
5.	Surat	15
6.	Surendernagar	9
7.	Vadodara	22
8.	Valsad (Bulsad)	16
9.	Amreli	6
10.	Navasari	5
11.	Baanaskhantha-Pinpur	13
12.	Bharuch	10
13.	Bhavnagar	8
14.	Jamnagar	18
15.	Junagarh	8
16.	Kheda (Nadiad)	15

1	2	3
17.	Kutch-Bhuj	15
18.	Mehsana	17
Total		268

STATE : HIMACHAL PRADESH

1.	Dharamsala (Kangra)	19
2.	Hamirpur	10
3.	Mandi	11
4.	Shimla	18
5.	Solan	8
6.	Kullu	12
Total		78

STATE : HARYANA

1.	Ambala	17
2.	Faridabad	5
3.	Hissar	15
4.	Karnal	14
5.	Rohtak	12
6.	Jind	5
7.	Sonepat	11
8.	Gurgaon	7
9.	Narnaul (Rewari)	5
Total		91

STATE : JAMMU & KASHMIR

1.	Jammu	11
2.	Srinagar	19
3.	Udhampur	0
4.	Leh	0
5.	Rajouri	0
Total		30

STATE : JHARKHAND

1.	Daltonganj	7
2.	Dhanbad	16

1	2	3
3.	Deoghar (Dumka)	15
4.	Hazaribagh	17
5.	Jamshedpur	10
6.	Ranchi	13
Total		78

STATE : KERALA

1.	Alleppey	15
2.	Trivandrum	21
3.	Malappuram	22
4.	Calicut (Kozhikode)	20
5.	Cannanore	20
6.	Ernakulam	23
7.	Kottayam	19
8.	Palghat	17
9.	Pathanamthitta (Tiruvala)	11
10.	Quilon	15
11.	Trichur	25
Total		208

STATE : KARNATAKA

1.	Bangalore	61
2.	Kolar	14
3.	Kodagu (Medikeri)	12
4.	Mangalore (D. Kannada)	22
5.	Mysore	20
6.	Raichur	9
7.	Shimoga	11
8.	Tumkur	11
9.	Chikamangalore	9
10.	Mandya	11
11.	Bidar	5
12.	Belgaum	17
13.	Bellary	12

1	2	3
14.	Bijapur	16
15.	Devangere	11
16.	Gulbarga	12
17.	Hassan	15
18.	Hubli (Dharwad)	16
19.	Karwar (U. Kannada)	9
	Total	293

STATE : METRO DISTRICTS

DELHI

1.	Delhi (C)	21
2.	Delhi (South-I)	19
3.	Delhi (South-II)	21
4.	Delhi (West-I)	18
5.	Delhi (West-II)	27
6.	Delhi (North-I)	16
7.	Delhi (North-II)	13
8.	Delhi (East)	16
9.	Delhi (TY)	24

MUMBAI

1.	Mumbai (Central)	7
2.	Mumbai (North)	9
3.	Mumbai (South)	12
4.	Mumbai (East-I)	9
5.	Mumbai (East-II)	8
6.	Mumbai (West-I)	16
7.	Mumbai (West-II)	1
8.	Mumbai (West-III)	2
9.	Mumbai (West-IV)	0
10.	Navi Mumbai	5

CHENNAI

1.	Chennai (Central)	19
2.	Chennai (North)	12

1	2	3
3.	Chennai (South)	23
4.	Chennai (West)	0
	KOLKATA	
1.	Kolkata (North)	16
2.	Kolkata (South)	22
3.	Kolkata (West)	7
4.	Kolkata (Central)	14
	Total (All Metro Districts)	357

STATE : MAHARASHTRA

1.	Ahmednagar	14
2.	Nagpur	19
3.	Nanded	11
4.	Nasik	13
5.	Panjim (Goa)	22
6.	Pune	20
7.	Raigadh (Pen)	3
8.	Ratnagiri	7
9.	Sangli	7
10.	Satara	14
11.	Sholapur	11
12.	Akola	14
13.	Bhandara	12
14.	Bhuldana (Khamgaon)	11
15.	Latur	10
16.	Beed (Bhir)	5
17.	Parbhani	9
18.	Wardha	5
19.	Yeotmal	7
20.	Sindhudurg (Kudal)	8
21.	Osmanabad	0
22.	Jalna	6
23.	Amravati	6

1	2	3
24.	Gadchiroli	2
25.	Aurangabad	10
26.	Chandrapur	6
27.	Dhule (Dhulia)	11
28.	Jalgaon	10
29.	Kalyan	14
30.	Kholapur	15
	Total	302

STATE : MADHYA PRADESH

1.	Bhopal	23
2.	Morena	10
3.	Ratlam	11
4.	Ujjain	9
5.	Dewas	5
6.	Chindwara	5
7.	Sagar	11
8.	Satna	15
9.	Guna	5
10.	Rewa	6
11.	Shivpuri	0
12.	Dhar	16
13.	Shajapur	10
14.	Shahdol	11
15.	Betul	8
16.	Chhatarpur	11
17.	Damoh	8
18.	Panna	7
19.	Sidhi	7
20.	Balaghat	10
21.	Mandla	3
22.	Seoni	7
23.	Gwalior	10

1	2	3
24.	Raisen	0
25.	Narsingpur	3
26.	Vidisha	5
27.	Rajgarh	0
28.	Jhabua	8
29.	Hoshangabad (Itarsi)	14
30.	Indore	13
31.	Jabalpur	19
32.	Khandwa	9
33.	Khargaon	15
34.	Mandsaur	15
	Total	309

STATE : NORTH EAST-I

1.	Agartala (Tripura)	22
2.	Mizoram (Aizwal)	16
3.	Shillong (Meghalaya)	21
	Total	59

STATE : NORTH EAST-II

1.	Dimapur (Nagaland)	18
2.	Imphal (Manipur)	22
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	20
	Total	60

STATE : ORISSA

1.	Berhampur	12
2.	Baripada (Mayurbhanj)	12
3.	Bhawanipatna (Kalahandi)	5
4.	Keonjhar	5
5.	Phulbani	2
6.	Bhubaneswar	18
7.	Cuttack	33
8.	Dhenkanal	9
9.	Rourkela	6

1	2	3
10.	Sambalpur	8
11.	Koraput	10
12.	Balasore	13
13.	Bolangir	7
Total		140

STATE : PUNJAB

1.	Amritsar	16
2.	Ropar	8
3.	Bhatinda	11
4.	Ferozepur	25
5.	Hoshiarpur	11
6.	Jalandhar	19
7.	Ludhiana	23
8.	Pathankot	16
9.	Patiala	14
10.	Sangrur	16
Total		159

STATE : RAJASTHAN

1.	Ajmer	20
2.	Kota	15
3.	Nagaur	10
4.	Pali	5
5.	Sikar	10
6.	Sirohi (Abu Road)	9
7.	Sriganga Nagar	0
8.	Udaipur	24
9.	Swai Madhopur	20
10.	Churu	10
11.	Chittorgarh	10
12.	Alwar	5
13.	Barmer	7
14.	Tonk	5

1	2	3
15.	Bundi	5
16.	Jhalawar	3
17.	Jaisalmer	6
18.	Bhilwara	15
19.	Bikaner	15
20.	Jaipur	24
21.	Jhunjhun	6
22.	Jodhpur	17
23.	Bharatpur	21
24.	Banswara	16
Total		278

STATE : TAMIL NADU

1.	Chengalpet (Kanchipuram)	12
2.	Salem	18
3.	Thanjavur	21
4.	Tirunelveli	18
5.	Trichy	30
6.	Turicorin	6
7.	Vellore	25
8.	Virudhunagar	14
9.	Dharmapuri	19
10.	Coimbatore	18
11.	Cuddalore	22
12.	Erode	18
13.	Karaikudi	17
14.	Kavei Delta (Kumbakonam)	5
15.	Madurai	43
16.	Nagarcoil	16
17.	Nilgiri (Coonoor/ooty)	8
Total		310

1	2	3
STATE : UTTAR PRADESH (EAST)		
1.	Allahabad	26
2.	Etawah	12
3.	Faizabad	16
4.	Farukkhabad	24
5.	Behraich	13
6.	Mirjapur	12
7.	Rae Bareilly	12
8.	Unnao	6
9.	Lakhimpur Khiri	12
10.	Basti	21
11.	Sultanpur	7
12.	Gorakhpur	21
13.	Gonda	15
14.	Mainpuri	11
15.	Sitapur	8
16.	Shahajahanpur	12
17.	Jaunpur	22
18.	Ballia	12
19.	Orai	10
20.	Hardoi	9
21.	Hamirpur	10
22.	Pratapgarh	10
23.	Jhansi	5
24.	Banda	17
25.	Ghazipur	13
26.	Deoria	23
27.	Fatehpur	11
28.	Kanpur	38
29.	Lucknow	0
30.	Mau	11
31.	Varanasi	22

1	2	3
32.	Azamgarh	26
33.	Barabanki	6
Total		473
STATE : UTTARANCHAL		
1.	Dehradun	16
2.	Almora	11
3.	Nainital	8
4.	Uttarkashi (Tehri)	9
5.	Kotdwar (Srinagar)	5
6.	Haridwar	15
Total		64
STATE : UNION TERRITORIES		
1.	Port Blair (A&N Islands)	10
2.	Chandigarh	14
3.	Lakshadweep (Kavaratty)	21
4.	Pondicherry	15
Total		60
STATE : UTTAR PRADESH (WEST)		
1.	Agra	33
2.	Rampur	13
3.	Bijnor	5
4.	Noida	7
5.	Etah	10
6.	Badayun	12
7.	Bulandshahar	10
8.	Pilibhit	10
9.	Aligarh	17
10.	Bareilly	23
11.	Ghaziabad	15
12.	Mathura	4
13.	Meerut	18
14.	Moradabad	25

1	2	3
15.	Muzaffarnagar	25
16.	Saharanpur	7
	Total	234

STATE : WEST BENGAL

1.	Asansol	27
2.	Raiganj	20
3.	Suri (Birbhum)	9
4.	Bankura	15
5.	Purulia	10
6.	Coochbehar	15
7.	Calcutta SSA (Howrah)	60
8.	Kharagpur	37
9.	Siliguri	13
10.	Sikkim (Gangtok)	16
11.	Krishna Nagar	15
12.	Berhampore	20
13.	Jalpaiguri	14
14.	Malda	14
	Total	285

[English]

Tapping of Thorium

2066. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have drawn up a programme for tapping of Thorium as an alternative to Uranium;

(b) if so, whether the technologies to tap the mineral have been developed in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the amount spent on the development of such technologies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The Government have drawn up a program for tapping of Thorium as an alternative to Uranium considering the abundance of Thorium in the country and relatively meagre indigenous resources of Uranium. The long term nuclear power programme, of India proposed by our scientists at the beginning of the Indian nuclear programme, envisages progressive deployment of Thorium based nuclear fuels for nuclear power generation.

The advanced heavy water reactor currently under development in Bhabha Atomic Research Centre will generate most of the power from Thorium.

(d) An amount of Rs. 22.43 crores has been spent so far, on development of the above technologies. An amount of Rs. 450.00 crores is proposed to be spent for the above purpose in the X plan.

[Translation]

Doctors' Studies Abroad

2067. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of doctors of various Government hospitals including AIIMS gone abroad for studies with the permission of the Government during the last five years;

(b) the number out of them who came back;

(c) the assistance given to them by the Government for studies alongwith the terms and conditions in this regard; and

(d) the action taken against those doctors who have not returned so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) 13 officers of Central Health Service, 67 faculty members of All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi and 13 doctors of Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research, Chandigarh have gone abroad for studies with the permission of the Government during the last five years. Generally the expenditure towards boarding, lodging travel etc. is borne by the organiser and the terms and conditions vary from case to case.

Only three officers have not returned after completing their period of study. Out of these, one doctor of Post Graduate Institute of Central Health Service has requested for extension and against another Central Health Service officer disciplinary action has been contemplated.

[English]

Review of functioning of NIC

2068. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of functions of National Informatics Centre (NIC);

(b) whether there is any proposal to modify/review/expand the functions of NIC;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) The major functions of National Informatics Centre are given below:

- Network backbone (NICNET) and e-Governance support to various organisations under the President of India or Governors of States including Government Ministries/Departments, attached and subordinate offices, semi-government organisations, public sector units, as well as autonomous societies, cooperatives and other organizations and also to the Parliament, Legislative Assemblies and Judiciary.
- Provision of network services including internet access, e-mail and web services.
- Technical support to Central Government Ministries/Departments and State Governments.
- Consultancy for IT applications.
- Assistance in the development of G2G applications.
- Development of G2C IT applications like passport, customs, land records etc.
- Technology assimilation, localization and its induction in e-Governance like mapping, geographical information system, computer aided design etc.

— Development of domain knowledge of various applications initiated by line Ministries/State Governments to provide continuity.

— Provide services, expertise and infrastructure including NICNET for supporting promotional activities/projects/programmes of national importance.

— Training in IT for officers/employees of Central Government and State Governments.

(b) and (c) The functions of NIC are reviewed periodically and appropriate modifications are made as considered necessary keeping in view the changing environment and needs.

(d) Does not arise.

Guidelines for Vitro Fertilisation

2069. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have framed guidelines for minimum bench marks for infrastructure requirements in (In Vitro Fertilisation) IVE clinics;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the manner in which the guidelines are proposed to be enforced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The ICMR with the National Academy of Medical Sciences (India) has drafted National Guidelines for Accreditation, Supervision and Regulation of ART clinics in India. The guidelines addresses the following issues in detail:

1. Minimum Requirement of ART Clinics.
2. Screening of Patients for ART, Selection Criteria and Possible Complications.
3. Code of Practice, Ethical Consideration and Legal Issues.
4. Caution, precaution and concern about ART Practice.
5. Training and Future research prospect in ART.

6. Providing ART services to the Economically weaker section of the Society.
7. Establishing National database for Human Infertility.
8. Composition of the National Accreditation Committee.

(c) The drafts guideline has been released for public debates. After incorporating the suggestions/comments of the public debates it will be submitted to the Govt. of India for instituting an appropriate mechanism for regulating ART services in the country.

Illegal Migration of European Union

2070. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of illegal migration from India to European Union through Moscow;

(b) if so, whether any joint effort has been made by Indian and Russian Embassy to stop such illegal immigration; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Video Conferencing in India

2071. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE:
SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the States which are having the facility of Video Conferencing in the country, State-wise and Location-wise;

(b) whether backward States and hilly areas people can also get benefit from this scheme;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the States which have no such facility alongwith the reasons therefor; State-wise; and

(e) the steps taken/being taken to provide this facility?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (e) The Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[*Translation*]

STD/ISD Booths in Rajasthan

2072. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of pending applications for STD/ISD booth, circle-wise in Rajasthan;

(b) number of persons applied for such booths during the last three years, location-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to clear all the pending applications?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Sir, the details of applications received for allotment of STD/ISD PCOs Booths during the last three years and the applications pending as on 31.01.2003 are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) Underground cables are being laid and wireless systems are being installed in non-feasible areas to clear the pending applications.

Statement

Name of Telecom District	Number of applications received for allotment of STD/ISD PCO booths during the last three years as on 31.01.2003			Number of applications pending for allotment of STD/ISD booths as on 31.01.2003
	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	
1	2	3	4	5
Ajmer	139	339	854	0
Alwar	138	483	412	0

1	2	3	4	5
Banswara	51	175	144	49
Barmer	37	140	179	9
Bharatpur	77	292	282	0
Bhilwara	173	298	154	0
Bikaner	195	512	522	0
Bundi	0	25	38	0
Chittorgarh	91	137	180	0
Churu	141	287	147	0
Jaipur	560	1720	1729	61
Jaisalmer	82	65	156	39
Jhalawar	18	61	20	0
Jhunjhunu	258	349	297	0
Jodhpur	327	464	866	206
Kota	101	204	220	0
Nagaur	156	531	200	179
Pali Marwar	163	400	343	46
Sawai Madhopur	114	274	297	0
Sikar	648	1127	428	0
Sirohi	150	196	436	0
Sriganganagar	354	520	416	0
Tonk	100	159	74	9
Udaipur	359	737	601	0

[English]

Irregularities in Purchase of Unani Medicines

2073. SHRIMATI REENA CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints received by the Government regarding mismanagement/irregularities and corruption in the purchase of Unani Medicines against CGHS Unani Dispensary, Sarojini Nagar, New Delhi, during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the Government have conducted any enquiry in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken against the officials found guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and would be laid on the Table of the House.

Change of Timings of CGHS Dispensaries

2074. SHRI SUBODH ROY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received representations from the CGHS beneficiaries to change the dispensary timings from the existing 07.30 a.m. to

01.30 p.m. in the forenoon to 02.00 p.m. to 08.00 p.m. in the afternoon; and

(b) if so, the response of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. One representation has been received which is under examination of the Govt.

Study Report on Homoeopathy Units

2075. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Study Report on Homoeopathy Units under Central Government Health Scheme has been completed by the Staff Inspection Unit;

(b) if so, the findings thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when it is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of the Ministry of Finance has conducted a study of the norms and functioning of the CGHS dispensaries/Units under the Indian System of Medicines and Homoeopathy and the report is pending finalisation.

(b) In view of (a) above, the question does not arise.

(c) and (d) The SIU has asked for additional data from the CGHS on receipt of which the report would be issued by the SIU.

[Translation]

Increase in Bimonthly Telephone Rental

2076. SHRIMATI JAYSHREE BANERJEE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether bi-monthly telephone rental for the subscribers of Panagar Telephone exchange, district Jabalpur, was increased from Rs.150/- to 275/- with effect from May, 1999;

(b) if so, whether the rent was reduced and recovered @ Rs. 150/- in place of Rs. 275/- during the period from February to April, 2000;

(c) whether the Department had issued any order to roll back the rent increase during the above period;

(d) if not, the reasons for recovering less rental for the telephone bills for the period February-April, 2000 without the approval of any competent authority; and

(e) the action proposed to be taken by the Government against the erring officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The rent was charged @ Rs. 150/- bi-monthly in the bills issued in February and April 2000 for the period of 1.12.1999 to 31.1.2000 and 1.2.2000 to 31.3.2000 respectively.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) The action to reduce rental had been taken by the local telephone authority against the background of some protests by local subscribers. He has since been strictly directed to avoid such action in future.

[English]

Visit of Poland Prime Minister

2077. SHRI C. SREENIVASAN:
SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister of Poland visited the country recently;

(b) if so, the details of bilateral agreements signed between the two countries;

(c) whether India and Poland have signed an extradition treaty; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) During the visit, the following bilateral documents were signed between the two countries:

(i) Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland

on Cooperation in Combating International terrorism and Organised Crime;

- (ii) Extradition Treaty between the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland; and
 - (iii) Agreement between the Republic of India and the Republic of Poland on Cooperation in the Field of Defence.
- (c) Yes.

(d) The Extradition Treaty signed between India and Poland will facilitate extradition of any person who is wanted for prosecution for, or is convicted of an extraditable offence committed within the territory of the Requesting State, and is found within the territory of the Requested State. An extradition offence for the purposes will be an act which under the laws of each Contracting State is punishable by a term of imprisonment for a period of at least one year. Political offences of certain categories, including murder of harm to the person of the Head of State or the Head of Government, other murders and grievous bodily harms, hostage taking, etc. will attract the provisions of the Treaty. The Treaty provides for provisional arrest in urgent cases. It also provides for seizure of the property of the person, whose extradition is sought, by the Requested State.

Grievances of Private Cellular Operators

2078. SHRI AMBAREESHA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government have held a meeting with the private Cellular operators recently;
- (b) if so, the details of grievances expressed by the private Cellular operators;
- (c) the reaction of the Government in this regard; and
- (d) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Sir, a meeting chaired by Minister of Communication and information Technology, was held on 14.02.2003 with the stake holders of major Telecom Service Sectors including Cellular Service Operators.

(b) to (d) Mainly, the Cellular and Basic Service Operators presented their points of view with regard to the Limited Mobility Service using Wireless in Local Loop provided by the Basic Service Operators. Although, the matter is before the statutory Tribunal, namely, the Telecom Disputes Settlement and Appellate Tribunal, a Committee consisting of the representatives of the concerned parties was constituted with a view to explore the possibility of amicable resolution of the differences.

Internet Service Provider Licences

2079. DR. N. VENKATASWAMY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of companies granted Internet Services Provider (ISP) licences in the country alongwith the number of people who have subscribed to the internet facility till date;
- (b) whether the band width presently available is sufficient to cater to the growing demands of internet traffic in the country;
- (c) if not, whether Internet Service Providers have been permitted to obtain band width from foreign satellites and establish International Gateways for internet traffic;
- (d) if so, the number of companies which has obtained band width facility; and
- (e) the extent to which the additional band width is likely to ease the demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) There are 340 companies, including private and public sector companies, having 395 Internet Service Provider (ISP) licences as on 28.02.2003. Information regarding number of Internet subscribers is received from the ISPs quarterly. There were 37,20,802 Internet subscribers as on 31.12.2002.

(b) to (e) Sir, International band width presently available is adequate to cater to the growing demands of Internet traffic in the country. Also the Government has permitted ISPs to set up International Gateways for Internet using foreign satellites and submarine cable mediums after taking security clearance. As on date, 24 ISPs have been permitted to commission 55 International Gateway for Internet using foreign satellites. This will further ease the availability for International bandwidth in the country.

Popularity of Ayurvedic Drugs

2080. DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a survey funded by the Commerce Ministry and conducted by the Health Ministry has found that Ayurvedic drugs are becoming popular in the United States;

(b) if so, the details of the suggestions and recommendations given in survey/report; and

(c) the action taken by the Government on the suggestions and recommendations of the survey/report to make Ayurvedic drugs popular in other countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Ayurvedia is gradually becoming popular in the U.S.A. A survey funded by Department of Indian Systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy and Department of Commerce have made several recommendations including propagation of Ayurveda in U.S.A., drugs standardization and enforcement of Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) etc. in India.

High Charges of Recognised Hospitals/Nursing Homes

2081. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:
SHRI BHASKARRAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that CGHS recognized Hospitals/Nursing Homes in NCR Towns of Faridabad, Gurgaon and NOIDA are charging more than prescribed amounts for treatment from CGHS beneficiaries;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to safeguard the interests of CGHS beneficiaries; and

(c) the action taken against guilty hospitals/nursing homes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) In view of (a) above, the questions do not arise.

Renovation of Operation Theatre of AIIMS

2082. SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the operation theatre in which experiments on monkeys are carried out at the AIIMS has been under renovation for over three months;

(b) if so, whether animal house invasive procedures like hysterectomy and laparotomy on experimental monkeys have been carried out in a seclude non-sterile animal room without the presence of veterinary doctor;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when renovation of operation theatre is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi have three posts of Veterinary Doctors including one created recently. One Veterinarian has superannuated on 31.10.2002. One person thus, is in position, Invasive, operative and postoperative procedures on moneys are being performed by persons duly qualified. Treatment/procedures is being done as per rule 9 (a) of the Breeding of and Experiments of Animals (Control and Supervision) Rules, 1998. Action has been initiated to fill vacant posts of Veterinarian. The renovation work is expected to be completed within one month.

Extradition of Bofors Accused

2083. COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Malaysian High Court has turned down the request of the CBI for the extradition of Bofors payoff accused Ottavio Quattrocchi as reported in the Times of India dated January 3, 2003;

(b) if so, the reasons cited by the court in this regard; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for his extradition?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes.

(b) The Sessions Court in Kuala Lumpur had on 2nd December 2002, discharged Ottavio Quattrocchi of the

Extradition proceedings on the grounds that a proper description of the offences committed by Mr. Quattrocchi had to be tendered in Court and that the failure to do so amounted to non-compliance with the Malaysian Law. On 13th December 2002, the Kuala Lumpur High Court upheld the decision of the Sessions Court.

(c) An appeal, challenging the High Court's decision has been filed in the Court of Appeal. The Court of Appeal, on 16th December 2002 passed an Ex parte Order directing Mr. Quattrocchi to surrender his passport to the Court pending disposal of the appeal. Subsequently, the Court of Appeal heard arguments from the parties involved on 6th January 2003 and reserved judgment to a date to be fixed. Developments in the case are being closely monitored by the Government.

UN Report on Population

2084. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any UN report has highlighted 'population effect' on growth as reported in the *Hindu* dated December 5, 2003;

(b) if so, whether the Government have examined the report;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to implement the suggestions made in the report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) Report on "State of World population 2002-people, poverty and possibilities" addresses population concerns and their relationship with poverty and overall economic development of the people. The major aspects highlighted in the report are as follows:—

- (i) There is a "population effect" on economic growth. Developing countries with lower fertility and slower population growth have registered higher productivity resulting in faster economic growth.
- (ii) Poor health holds back economic growth. Some of the manifestations of poverty are: more children, ill health, illiteracy, gender inequality, reduced life expectancy, high disease burden, HIV/AIDS etc. adversely affecting their development.

(iii) Educated women have fewer pregnancies leading to women's empowerment, better health, better education of their children as they know the value of education resulting in reducing level of poverty.

(iv) Governments, communities, the private sector and the international community must cooperate to improve the health of the poor by putting their sustained efforts effectively.

(d) Several steps has been taken to implement the suggestions made in the report, such as:

(i) A comprehensive National Population Policy-2000 has been adopted by the Government with a package of services and supplies.

(ii) National Commission on Population has been constituted directly under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister with Chief Ministers of all the States/UTs, demographers, non-government organizations and public health professionals as members to advise in operationalising the National Population Policy. Likewise, the establishment of a National Population Stabilisation Fund under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister has been approved. This will facilitate mobilisation of resource and greater involvement of the private sector in population stabilisation.

(iii) An Empowered Action Group has been constituted under the chairmanship of the Union Health and Family Welfare Minister for focussed attention on improving the coverage and outreach of services in the eight states of Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, involving voluntary associations, community organizations and Panchayati Raj institutions in this national effort.

(iv) In order to arrest the adverse sex ratio, the Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques Act of 1994 has been subsequently amended providing more stringent punishment for violation of the provisions of the Act, and the enforcement machinery right at district level being suitably trained.

(v) Basket of choice of contraceptives has been enhanced by inclusion of Cu.T. 380. A, an improved version of IUDs and Emergency contraceptives pills recently. To enhance male-participation the NO-Scalpel-Vasectomy NSV is being encouraged.

- (vi) Resources and skills of the Indian Systems of Medicine are also being utilized in the RCH Programme.
- (vii) NGOs participation is being secured through financial assistance being extended to Mother NGOs and field NGOs to undertake advocacy and social obligations of doctors.

Construction of Reactor at Kalpakkam

2085. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI:
SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government propose to float a company to oversee construction of reactor at Kalpakkam;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research at Kalpakkam is preparing itself to reprocess the spent fuel; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV), is envisaged for the implementation of the 500 MWe capacity Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR) at Kalpakkam, after the project is accorded financial sanction. Preparatory work on the same is in progress.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Fast Breeder Reactor (FBR) requires closing of the fuel cycle. The fuel discharged from the Fast Breeder Test Reactor (FBTR) has to be reprocessed, on a laboratory scale, in the Lead Mini Cell, which is under final stage of commissioning.

It is planned to design and start the construction of the fuel reprocessing plant at Kalpakkam, during the X plan, for reprocessing the spent fuel from Prototype Fast Breeder Reactor (PFBR).

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra

2086. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether some NRIs are luring Indians to undertake Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through Kathmandu;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether some Indians have already used this route;
- (d) if so, whether the Government had given the requisite permission to such pilgrims; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) to (e) The Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, along the traditional route across Lipulekh Pass in Pithoragarh District of Uttaranchal, is coordinated by the Ministry of External Affairs and conducted with the assistance of various Central and State Government agencies. Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam (KMVN) arranges board and lodging for Yatris on the Indian side.

Some local Nepali travel agents organize tours from Kathmandu for people of all nationalities including from India to undertake Kailash Mansarovar Yatra. Government's permission is not required for Indian citizens undertaking the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra through third countries including from Nepal.

Supervision of CBI by CVC

2087. SHRI SHRINIWAS PATIL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Central Vigilance Commissioner has been entrusted with the work of supervising CBI;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Union Government have approved a two year tenure for CBI Director;
- (d) if so, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Government have created a post of Director Prosecution in CBI;
- (f) if so, the details thereof; and
- (g) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF

ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Superintendence of the Delhi Special Police Establishment currently vests in the Central Government under section 4 of the Delhi Special Police Establishment Act, 1946. The Central Vigilance Commission Bill, now under the consideration of the Parliament for its passage, envisages transfer of this responsibility to the Central Vigilance Commission.

(c) and (d) Taking into consideration the recommendations made by the Independent Review Committee on 18th November 1997, set up by the Central Government on 8th September 1997, to examine the present structure and functioning of the Central Bureau of Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate, and later in keeping with the directions of the Supreme court in Vinnat Narain's case given on 18th December 1997, the minimum tenure of the Director CBI, regardless of the date of his superannuation, has been fixed at 2 years. The Independent Review Committee had, in making the recommendation observed, that the tenure of recent incumbents to the post of Director CBI had been of about 2 years or less, before superannuation at the age of 58 years. Therefore, it considered appropriate that to ensure that an officer suitable in all respects is not ignored, merely because he has less than 2 years to superannuate, a minimum tenure of 2 years should be provided to Director, CBI.

(e) to (g) Since its inception in April 1963, the Legal Division of Central Bureau of Investigation has remained under the charge of an officer borne on the strength of the Ministry of Law. While continuing this arrangement and in pursuance of the directions of the Supreme Court in Vinnat Narain's case, emanating from the recommendations of the Independent Review Committee, a Directorate of Prosecution has been set up in the Central Bureau of Investigation in January, 2001 by renaming the Legal Division. The Director of Prosecution has been appointed on 30th October, 2002 for a period of 3 years and the task of supervising prosecutions launched by the CBI has been entrusted to the Directorate.

[Translation]

Establishment of Medical Colleges

2088. DR. (SHRIMATI) SUDHA YADAV:
SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA:
SHRI RAMDAS RUPALA GAVIT:
SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI:
SHRI MOINUL HASSAN:
SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of medical colleges (both Government and private separately) at present in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the States for the establishment of new medical colleges;

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

(d) the time by which a decision is likely to be taken thereon; and

(e) the number of medical colleges likely to be opened during the current year State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Details given in the Statement-I.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) During the year 2002, 47 proposals were received from various States for opening of new medical colleges. Details of such proposals, State-wise is given in Statement-II. In addition, 9 proposals of earlier years are also pending. Out of 47 proposals received in 2002, 22 proposals were found to be meeting the qualifying criteria prescribed in Medical Council of India Regulations. As such as on date a total of 31 proposals are pending with Central Government/Medical Council of India. The State-wise details of these proposals are given in Statement-III.

(d) and (e) The clearance of these proposals depend on availability of infrastructural facilities and recommendations of the Medical Council of India thereon.

Statement-I

S.No.	State	Number of Medical College		Total
		Govt/Univ.	Private	
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	10	11	21
2.	Assam	3	—	3
3.	Bihar	6	2	8
4.	Chandigarh	1	—	1
5.	Chhattisgarh	2	—	2

1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Delhi	5	—	5	17.	Manipur	—	1	1
7.	Goa	1	—	1	18.	Orissa	3	—	3
8.	Gujarat	8	3	11	19.	Pondichery	1	4	5
9.	Haryana	1	1	2	20.	Punjab	3	3	6
10.	Himachal Pradesh	2	—	2	21.	Rajasthan	6	1	7
11.	Jammu & Kashmir	3	1	4	22.	Sikkim	1	—	1
12.	Jharkhand	3	—	3	23.	Tamil Nadu	12	5	17
13.	Karnataka	4	26	30	24.	Uttar Pradesh	9	3	12
14.	Kerala	7	4	11	25.	Uttaranchal	—	1	1
15.	Madhya Pradesh	5	1	6	26.	West Bengal	7	—	7
16.	Maharashtra	17	18	35	Total		120	85	205

Statement II

S.No.	Name of the Society/Applicant	Place of estt. of medical college	Private/ Govt.	No. of admission
1	2	3	4	5

ANDHRA PRADESH

1.	GSL Educational Society, Rajahmundry	Rajahmundry	Pvt.	150
2.	Sri Rama Education Trust, Vizianagaram, AP	Vizianagaram	Pvt.	100
3.	Bhagwan Mahavir Memorial Trust, Hyderabad	Vikarabad	Pvt.	100
4.	Medicare Educational Trust, Warangal, AP	Warangal	Pvt.	100
5.	Siddhartha Academy of General & Technical Education, Vijayawada	Chinoutpally, Krishna Distt.	Pvt.	150
6.	CSI Arogyavaram Medical Centre, Chittoor, AP	Arogyavaram Chittoor	Pvt.	100
7.	Mother Theresa Educational Society, East Godavari, AP	Amalapura, East Godavari	Pvt.	150.
8.	Arihant Educational Society, Hyderabad (122/02)	Bommakal, Karimnagar	Pvt.	150
9.	Mohammadiya Educational Society, Cuddapah, AP	Cuddapah	Pvt.	100
10.	Tesla Medical Education & Research, Hyderabad	Bellampally	Pvt.	100
11.	NRI Academy of Sciences, Vijayawada	Chinnakakani, Guntur	Pvt.	150
12.	Aditya Educational Society, Hyderabad	Srikakulam	Pvt.	100

1	2	3	4	5
ASSAM				
1.	Down Town Charity Trust, Guwahati	Panikhalti	Pvt.	100
BIHAR				
1.	Lord Buddha Siksha Partishan, Bihar	Saharsa	Pvt.	—
2.	Roquiya Educational Trust, Patna	Beldari Tola, West Champaran	Pvt.	100
CHHATTISGARH				
1.	Govt. of Chhattisgarh	Raigarh	Govt.	100
2.	Govt. of Chhattisgarh	Bhilai	Govt.	100
3.	Mennonite Medical Board Trust, Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh	Dhamtari	Pvt.	100
GUJARAT				
1.	Bharatiya Arogya Nidhi, Mumbai	Patan	Pvt.	100
2.	K.M. Shah Charitable Trust, Vadodara, GJ	Piparia	Pvt.	150
HARYANA				
1.	Maharishi Markandeshwar Education Trust, Ambala City, Haryana	Mullana Ambala	Pvt.	150
JHARKHAND				
1.	Sharda Social Welfare and Educational Trust, Ranchi	Mosabani (Ghatshila)	Pvt.	100
2.	Council for Agriculture Industrialisation and Rural Employment, New Delhi	Bokaro Steel City	Pvt.	—
KARNATAKA				
1.	Vijayanagar Educational Trust, Bangalore	Lingenahalli	Pvt.	100
2.	Islamia Education Trust, Gulbarga, KA	Sinoor, Gulbarga	Pvt.	100
3.	Moogambigai Charitable & Educational Trust, Bangalore	Kambipura, Bangalore	Pvt.	100
4.	Karnataka Adijambava Social & Educational Trust, Bangalore	Dasanpura, Bangalore	Pvt.	100
5.	Bapuji Educational Association, Davangere, KA	Davangere	Pvt.	100
KERALA				
1.	Safe Development Alms Trust, Palakkad, Kerala	Vilayodi, Palakkad	Pvt.	100
2.	Jubille Mission Trust, Trissur, KL	Trissur	Pvt.	100

1	2	3	4	5
3.	Amala Cancer Hospital, Trissur, KL	Amalanagar, Trissur	Pvt.	100
4.	Dr. KN Pai Heart Foundation, Trivandrum	Vattappara, Trivandrum	Pvt.	100
5.	Muslim Educational Society, Calicut, KL	Malapparambu, Malappuram	Pvt.	100
MAHARASHTRA				
1.	Aditya Education Trust, Beed, Maharashtra	Beed	Pvt.	150
MADHYA PRADESH				
1.	Devi Ahilya Viswavidyalaya, Indore	Indore	Univ.	100
MEGHALAYA				
1.	NEITED, Shillong	Shillong	Pvt.	100
ORISSA				
1.	Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology, Bhubaneswar	Bhubaneswar	Pvt.	100
2.	Sahut Trust Bhubaneswar	Bhubaneswar	Pvt.	—
TAMIL NADU				
1.	Meenakshi Ammal Trust, Chennai	Enathur Village, Kanchipuram	Pvt.	100
2.	Raja Educational & Charitable Trust, Tirunelveli, TN	Kavalkinaru Junction, Tirunelveli	Pvt.	100
3.	CSI Kanyakumari Diocese, TN	Neyyoor, Kanyakumari	Pvt.	100
4.	Indian Education Trust, Thanjavur, TN	Sengipatti, Thanjavur	Pvt.	—
UTTAR PRADESH				
1.	Royal Society of Educational Academy, Kanpur, UP	Kanpur, UP	Pvt.	100
2.	Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Trust, New Delhi	Mushiganj, Amethi, UP	Pvt.	100
3.	All India Children Care & Educational Development Society, Azamgarh	Azamgarh, UP	Pvt.	100
WEST BENGAL				
1.	Govt. of West Bengal	Midnapore, WB	Govt.	100
2.	Instt. of PG Medical Education & Research, Kolkatta	PG Instt. Kolkatta	Govt.	150

Statement III

Sl.No.	Name of the Organization/Society/Trust	Where to establish the college
1	2	3
ANDHRA PRADESH		
1.	Christian Medical College & Hospital, Dechpalli, Nizamabad	Dechpalli
2.	GSL Educational Society, Rajahmundry	Rajahmundry
3.	Sri Rama Education Trust, Vizianagaram	Vizianagaram
4.	Bhagwan Mahavir Memorial Trust, Hyderabad	Vikarabad
5.	Medicare Educational Trust, Warangal	Warangal
6.	Siddhartha Academy of General & Technical Education	Vijayawada
7.	CSI Arogyavaram Medical Centre, Chittoor	Arogyavaram Chittoor
8.	Mother Theresa Educational Society, East Godavari	Amalapuram
9.	Arihant Educational Society, Hyderabad	Bommakal, Karimnagar
10.	Mohammadiya Educational Society, Cuddapah	Cuddapah
11.	Tesla Medical Education & Research, Hyderabad	Bellampally
12.	NRI Academy of Sciences, Vijayawada	Chinnakani
CHHATTISGARH		
13.	Mennonite Medical Board Trust, Dhamtari	Dhamtari
GUJARAT		
14.	K.K. Shah Charitable Trust, Vadodara	Pipari, Vadodara
HARYANA		
15.	Maharishi Markandeshwar Education Trust, Ambalacity	Mulana Ambala
KERALA		
16.	Imam Razi Muslim Educational Charitable Trust, Palakkad	Mala, Trissur
17.	Jubilee Mission Trust, Trissur	Trissur
18.	Amala Cancer Hospital, Trissur	Trissur
19.	Muslim Educational Society, Calicut	Malappuram
20.	Dr. K.N. Pai Heart Foundation, Thiruvananthapuram	Vattappara, Thiruvananthapuram

1	2	3
	KARNATAKA	
21.	Bapuji Educational Association, Davangere	Davangere
	MAHARASHTRA	
22.	Padmashri Vithalrao Vikhe Patil Foundation, Ahmednagar	Ahmednagar
23.	Govt. of Maharashtra	Akola
24.	Govt. of Maharashtra	Latur
	MEGHALAYA	
25.	North Eastern India Trust for Education and Development, Shillong	Shillong
	RAJASTHAN	
26.	India Medical Trust, Jaipur	Jaipur
	TAMIL NADU	
27.	Meenakshmi Ammal Trust, Chennai	Enathur Village, Kanchipuram
28.	Sri Lakshmi Ammal Educational Trust, Chennai	Chennai
	UTTARANCHAL	
29.	Uttaranchal Forest Hospital Trust, Haldwani	Haldwani, Nainital
	WEST BENGAL	
30.	Govt. of West Bengal	Midnapore
31.	Instt. of Post Graduate Medical Education & Research, Kolkatta	Kolkatta

[English]

Financial Assistance for AIDS

2089. SHRIMATI MINATI SEN:
SHRI P. RAJENDRAN:
SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Mr. Bill Gates of USA had donated money to the country to carry out the research work on the remedial measures of AIDS; and

(b) if so, the amount of money received and the manner in which it is proposed to be utilized?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Mr. Bill Gates of USA has announced a financial package of assistance for India of up to Rs. 500 crores to fight HIV/AIDS in India, addressing primarily the mobile populations.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have sought time to forward to India a draft Memorandum of Understanding for our consideration. The institutional arrangements and modalities of co-operation, mutual obligations and responsibilities have yet to be spelt out.

Government of India, has not received any funds from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

[Translation]

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Growth of Population

2090. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI:
SHRI J.S. BRAR:
SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite several efforts to control the growth of population, the desired results have not been achieved so far;

(b) if so, whether there are any communities/segments or areas which have been unable to achieve the desired results;

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

(d) whether any fund have been allocated/released by the World Bank for population control schemes; and

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) As per census 2001, the average exponential growth rate of population in the country declined to 1.93% during 1991-2001 as compared to 2.14% during 1981-91.

The pace of achievement has varied among states, regions and districts. Nine States and Union Territories have achieved replacement levels of fertility and eleven more are poised to achieve the targets set in National Population Policy, 2000. However, the socio-demographic indices of Bihar, U.P., M.P., Orissa and Rajasthan need significant improvement.

The factors for high growth rate in population are low literacy levels, especially in women, women's status in family and society, gaps in health infrastructure and supplies and felt need of high fertility due to high IMR and son preference etc.

(d) and (e) Funds provided by World Bank for India Population Projects and Reproductive and Child Health Sub-projects is given in the statement enclosed.

Statement

(Rs. in crores)

Name of the Project	Period	States/cities covered	Total cost	Funds released	Expenditure Reported
World Bank assisted India Population Project VIII	6.8.93 30.6.2002	Delhi, Kolkatta, Hyderabad, Bangalore & 73 cities of Andhra Pradesh, 11 cities of Karnataka and 10 cities of West Bengal	429.40	384.90	397.60
World Bank assisted India Population Project IX	16.06.1994 to 31.12.2001	3 cities of Assam, 13 districts of Karnataka and 10 districts, of Rajasthan	422.58	354.37	384.53
RCH (Reproductive & Child Health) Sub-Project	01.10.1997 to 31.3.2003	17 districts and 7 cities of 17 States	286.96	201.50	126.70

[English]

Memory Pills

2091. DR. MANDA JAGANNATH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the doctors have warned that memory pills increase nervousness, irritability, anxiety and physical tremors instead of boosting attention and comprehension as reported in the *Times of India* dated January 17, 2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/being taken by the Government to discourage the use of these pills?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The term 'memory pills' has no scientific basis, and it is used for a variety of drugs which claim/are erroneously believed to enhance memory. The most commonly used drugs for 'boosting attention and comprehension' are the amphetamines and methephenidate. Both these drugs are potentially dangerous and can cause heightened anxiety, restlessness/agitation, sleeplessness and even psychosis (abnormal behaviour, delusions, and hallucinations). They are also addictive and often lead to abuse.

The use of amphetamines is currently banned and methylphenidate is available only from selected outlets under strict medical control/prescription for specific indications such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) in children above 6 years age.

Opening of Advance Medical Research Centres

2092. SHRI P. MOHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the Government of Tamil Nadu for the opening of Advanced Medical Research Centre and Referral Hospital at Madurai;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the location and estimated cost of the project;

(d) the funds proposed to be allocated by the Government; and

(e) by when the proposal is expected to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. In the year 2001, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare had received a copy of the proposal sent by the Government of Tamil Nadu to the Planning Commission for establishing a Referral Hospital and Institute of Post Graduate Medical Education and Research near Madurai at a total cost of Rs. 123.10 crores envisaging provision of all modern facilities required for super specialties.

Health being a State subject, the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare is not having any scheme for providing financial assistance to the State Governments for setting up institutions in the field of medicine and health. This position was informed to the Planning Commission and also to the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Disinvestment of NFL

2093. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the performance of the National Fertilizer Limited (NFL) is very impressive and its net profit after tax during the last fiscal year had been Rs. 40.61 crores as against Rs. 27.31 crores in 2000-2001;

(b) if so, the reasons for disinvesting its 51% of equity;

(c) whether the Government have any plan to review/reconsider the decision of disinvestment of NFL; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) Yes, Sir. Of the five plants of National Fertilizers Limited (NFL), Vijaipur I and Vijaipur II made a profit before tax of Rs. 74.50 crore and Rs. 115.10 crore respectively in 2001-02. The plants at Nangal, Bathinda and Panipat incurred losses of Rs. 81.50 crore, Rs. 33.50 crore and Rs. 26.10 crore respectively-before taxes.

(b) Disinvestment in Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) is being undertaken as per the declared policy of the Government to bring down its equity in non-strategic CPSUs to 26% or below in generality of cases. The non-strategic CPSUs are those, which are not in the areas of arms & ammunitions and allied items of defence equipment, defence aircrafts and warships, atomic energy (except in the areas related to the

generation of nuclear power and applications of radiations and radio-isotopes to agriculture, medicine and non-strategic industries) and railway transport. This policy is applicable to profit-making as well as loss-making CPSUs. In accordance with the recommendations of the Disinvestment Commission, the Government has decided to disinvest its equity in National Fertilizers Limited as it operates in the non-strategic sector.

(c) No, Sir.

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

Construction of Road Over Bridge

2094. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Road Over Bridge (ROB) under construction in the National Highways NH-17, NH-47 and NH-49;

(b) the stage of construction of each, and the amount spent thereon so far;

(c) whether more railway over bridges are planned in these national highways; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) The details of Road-Over-Bridge (ROB) which are under construction on NH-17, NH-47 and NH-49 are given below. All these ROB are located in the State of Kerala.

Sl. No.	Name of Railway crossing	Location	Stage of construction	Amount spent so far (Rs. in lakh)
1.	Chorode	Km. 195 of NH-17	Deck slab yet to be casted by the Railways, Approaches completed	533.39
2.	Muzhuppilangad	Km. 171/500 of NH-17	Work in progress	101.13
3.	Nandi	Km. 215/525 of NH-17	Work in progress	56.51
4.	Chengottukavu	Km. 224/170 of NH-17	Work in progress	158.85
5.	Vengalam	Km. 231/625 of NH-17	Work in progress	189.60
6.	Vengoli	Km. 237/450 of NH-17	Work in progress	286.06
7.	Chakkai	Ch. 9800m of Trivandrum-Neyyatinkara bypass on NH-47	ROB completed by the Railways and approach works are in progress	2022.80
8.	Thirupunithura	Km. 282 of NH-49	Out of 12 spans, work on 10 spans already completed.	158.12

(c) and (d) In addition, following Railway-Over-Bridge are planned in Kerala:—

Sl.No.	Name of Railway crossing	Location	Present Status
1.	Edappally	Km. 437/375 of NH-17	Land acquisition is in progress
2.	Padannakad	Km. 90/635 of NH-17	Land acquisition completed
3.	Pallikara	Km. 96/035 of NH-17	Land Acquisition is nearing completion
4.	Alleppy bypass	2 ROB (i) Ch. 2750m and (ii) CH. 5320 m of NH-47	Land acquisition completed. Estimates from Railway authorities awaited

Attack on Indians in Hong Kong

2095. SHRI GUTHA SUKENDER REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a group of Indian revellers were attacked on New Year's eve in Hong Kong;
- (b) if so, whether the Indian diplomatic mission took up this matter with the authorities there; and
- (c) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes.

(b) Yes

(c) The reply of Hong Kong police to our Consulate General in Hong Kong is as follows:

"In the early morning of 1 January 2003, a group of Indian men were attacked by twenty plus Pakistan men in park in Wanchai close to the Queen Elizabeth Stadium. Mr. Curry Mandeep Singh was assaulted with a blunt instrument to the base of his skull. Mr. Curry immediately slipped into coma from which he never regained consciousness. He was certified dead at 1340 hours on 02.01.2003. Following police inquiries, a total of eight men were arrested. The matter is now under review by the Department of Justice."

Installation of BTS

2096. SHRI K.A. SANGTAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the total number of Base Trans-Receiver Stations required by the BSNL to provide proper connectivity to the villages in remote areas of Nagaland have been supplied and completed;
- (b) if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the time by which the Base Trans-Receiver Stations are likely to be installed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) Eight out of ten Base Trans-Receiver Stations planned for Nagaland have been commissioned. The equipment for the remaining two has been received and is expected to be commissioned by May 2003.

Public Utility Services

2097. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:
SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government are aware of the low capacity of number 197 and other public utility services and the consequent problems that are being faced by the people;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether DOT proposes to shift from utility service like '197' to other sections in Hyderabad;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor; and
- (e) the action taken to update directory information and also to revamp 197 service?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) The capacity (number of junctions) of 197 and other public utility services are sufficient.

- (b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.
- (c) No, Sir.
- (d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

(e) Sir, with the commissioning of DOTSOFT which is an Integrated Customer Care and Billing Software Package, Directory Information '197' service is now updated promptly and regularly.

Establishment of National Ayurvedic Park

2098. SHRI V.S. SIVAKUMAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government have received any proposal from Kerala for the establishment of National Ayurvedic Park;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the decision of the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a)

to (c) The Government have received a proposal. At present there is no Scheme to provide grant-in-aid to such a project.

Modernisation of Jetties

2099. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to provide funds for the modernisation of Jetties; and

(b) if so, the funds released so far in this regard during the last three years, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI):

(a) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government at present.

(b) Does not arise.

Non-utilisation of Plan expenditure

2100. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADODA MANDLIK:

SHRI C.N. SINGH:

SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the States which have not achieved the stipulated target in regard to plan expenditure during the last three years;

(b) the reasons for non-utilisation of plan-expenditure, State-wise;

(c) the action taken by the Government against the defaulting States;

(d) whether cases of diversion of funds by States, particularly by Rajasthan have been noticed; and

(e) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Statement-I showing State-wise plan performance during the last three years viz, 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-02 is enclosed. The inability of the States of mobilize adequate resources is the main reason for shortfall in expenditure.

(c) to (e) Proportionate cut in Central Assistance is imposed for States, which record lower expenditure than the targeted Revised Plan Outlays and also on account of shortfalls in the earmarked outlays. Statement-II showing the details of cuts in Central Assistance, State-wise, for the year 2001-02 is enclosed. Only Special Category States are allowed to divert up to 20% of their Normal Central Assistance for non-plan activities like maintenance and repair with the approval of the Planning Commission. Such diversion of funds from Plan to Non-Plan is not permitted for Non-special Category States, including Rajasthan, and no such diversion has been experienced in the years 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-02.

Statement-I

Plan Performances of States in 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-02 in Percent

Sl.No.	States	Annual Plan 1999-2000	Annual Plan 2000-01	Annual Plan 2001-02
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	86.65	105.63	93.30
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	93.12	85.24	99.99
3.	Assam	93.64	97.36	100.00*
4.	Bihar	108.24	94.33	100.00*
5.	Chhattisgarh	—	—	100.00*
6.	Goa	98.30	103.97	100.00*

1	2	3	4	5
7.	Gujarat	99.12	70.82	89.43
8.	Haryana	93.92	94.14	84.38
9.	Himachal Pradesh	101.40	100.15	101.43
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	85.69	87.73	100.00*
11.	Jharkhand	—	—	100.00*
12.	Karnataka	121.63	100.00	88.39
13.	Kerala	97.87	118.46	74.96
14.	Madhya Pradesh	103.32	96.27	108.48
15.	Maharashtra	85.67	83.36	100.00*
16.	Manipur	95.29	57.71	67.82
17.	Meghalaya	98.08	99.11	97.09
18.	Mizoram	99.35	93.75	107.69
19.	Nagaland	95.53	97.41	101.60
20.	Orissa	98.96	100.46	76.67
21.	Punjab	65.42	87.41	100.00*
*22.	Rajasthan	93.41	88.82	92.27
23.	Sikkim	77.30	87.36	100.00*
24.	Tamil Nadu	103.12	101.34	86.09
25.	Tripura	103.55	112.19	100.00*
26.	Uttar Pradesh	128.76	88.15	58.01
27.	Uttaranchal	—	—	100.00*
28.	West Bengal	106.88	139.85	79.23
Total (States)		98.55	96.61	89.11

Note: 1. The performance figure is percent of expenditure over Revised Outlay/Approved Outlay.

2. The figure for Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh for 1999-2000 and 2000-01 include the new States of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttaranchal respectively.

Revised Outlay is taken as Anticipated Expenditure.

Statement-II*Cut in Normal Central Assistance in 2001-02*

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	States	Cut on account of shortfalls in 1998-99, 1999-2000, 2000-01 & 2001-02
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1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	175.17
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00
3.	Assam	43.16
4.	Bihar	45.80
5.	Chhattisgarh	0.00
6.	Goa	0.00
7.	Gujarat	0.00
8.	Haryana	12.21
9.	Himachal Pradesh	0.00
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	155.10
11.	Jharkhand	0.00
12.	Karnataka	0.00
13.	Kerala	0.00
14.	Madhya Pradesh	8.38
15.	Maharashtra	39.03
16.	Manipur	17.51
17.	Meghalaya	5.66
18.	Mizoram	0.00
19.	Nagaland	0.00
20.	Orissa	0.00
21.	Punjab	0.00
22.	Rajasthan	11.56
23.	Sikkim	0.00
24.	Tamil Nadu	0.00
25.	Tripura	0.00

1	2	3
26.	Uttar Pradesh	260.53
27.	Uttaranchal	0.00
28.	West Bengal	10.00
Total		784.11

Closing of Andaman Trunk Road

2101. SHRI A.C. JOS: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to close the Andaman Trunk Road (ATR) which connects South Andaman to North Andaman and is the lifeline of rural people of North and Middle Andaman; and

(b) if so, the alternative arrangement being considered by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) This Ministry is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of National Highways only. All other roads fall within the purview of the respective State Government/Union Territory. The Andaman Trunk Road is not a National Highway and therefore does not fall within the purview of this Ministry.

Procurement of Artificial Limbs

2102. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of procedure required under CS (MA) Rules for CGHS beneficiaries for procuring artificial limbs;

(b) whether cancer patients after facing amputation in CGHS approved private hospitals/diagnostic centers are required to furnish "Essentiality Certificate" from Specialist Doctors from Government Hospitals for procuring artificial limb;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the list of all approved Government Hospitals from where such certificates could be procured;

(d) whether there have been instances where sanction was conveyed without insisting upon essentiality certificate;

(e) if so, the reasons therefor alongwith the number of such cases from 1.1.2000 to 31.1.2003; and

(f) the measures being taken by the Government to remove such disparity?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Permission to the CGHS beneficiaries for purchasing artificial appliances including artificial limbs is granted as per Govt. approved ceiling rates on the basis of the advice by the Govt. Specialist.

In case of the Govt. Rehabilitation specialist/ Orthopaedic Surgeon (not below the level of consultant) advises an item not included in the list of Govt. approved appliances, the permission in such cases is granted as under:

- (i) For items costing below Rs. 2000/-, the same can be purchased without any quotation.
- (ii) For items costing above Rs. 2000/- prior permission from the Addl. Director of the concerned CGHS city is to be obtained.
- (iii) Requests for new and expensive items are considered by the Govt. on a case-to-case basis.

(b) CGHS beneficiaries suffering from Cancer and advised artificial limb by the Govt. specialist are duly granted permission by the CGHS as per procedure indicated in (a) above.

(c) The specialist (in the relevant field) of the Govt. hospitals throughout the country can advise artificial limb/appliance to the CGHS beneficiary.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) In view of (d) above, the questions do not arise.

Deadline to Register for Drug Import

2103. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the deadline to register for drug import has been extended upto March 31, 2003;

(b) if so, the names of companies and drugs which have been registered;

(c) the details of pending applications;

(d) whether the Government would clear all these applications by March 31, 2003; and

(e) if so, the procedure for import of new drugs and the likely registration of the companies after the said deadline?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Mutual Credit Guarantee Schemes

2104. SHRI Y.V. RAO: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are finalizing a plan for introduction of mutual credit guarantee schemes for Small Scale Industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when these are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) to (c) The Government of India has requested the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Small Industries (CGTSI) to operationalise the Mutual Credit Guarantee Schemes (MCGS). The scheme aims to provide collateral free loans under which CGTSI gives counter guarantee to Mutual Credit Guarantee Funds set up by Industry Associations in respect of credit availed by their member small scale industrial units from the dedicated banks. The CGTSI has already started consultations with industry associations seeking their interest in setting up the MCGS.

Streamlining of Passport System

2105. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA: SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of regional passport officers was held in January, 2003 at New Delhi to streamline the passport system in the country;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions held in the meeting; and

(c) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes. A meeting of all Passport Officers was held at New Delhi on January 27-29, 2003.

(b) and (c) During the meeting, the major issues discussed related to further improving the system of issuance of passports. The Government is making the process of issuance of passports more efficient and transparent through computerization and decentralization of the passport issuance system.

Coastal Shipping

2106. SHRI BHASKARRAO PATIL:
SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are drawing up the blue print to develop a string of ports in the entire Indian peninsula; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) and (b) Major Ports fall under the administrative domain of the Central Government. At present, there is no proposal to set up a new major port. Development of minor ports (non-major ports) is within the ambit of the respective State Government. However, Ministry of Shipping has decided to get a study conducted for development of coastal shipping and minor ports, for which Director General (Shipping), Mumbai has already been requested to take necessary action to engage consultant for the proposed study.

Seniority List of SC/ST Officers

2107. SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the seniority lists of TES Group-B in respect of SC/ST officers was revised in compliance to 85th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2001 by the Department of Telecommunications;

(b) if so, whether on the basis of these revised lists the SC/ST officers were promoted to STS Group-A on ad-hoc/local officiating; basis;

(c) whether these revised seniority lists were withdrawn by setting aside the provisions of 85th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2001;

(d) if so, as a result of the withdrawal of these revised seniority lists, the SC/ST officers promoted to grade STS of ITS Group-A on ad-hoc/local officiating local basis were

reverted and general category officers promoted against them; and

(e) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The list was withdrawn but not by setting aside the provisions of 85th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2001.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) The reverted officers were unduly promoted in contravention of a judgement dated 26.04.2000 of Hon'ble Supreme Court of India.

US Assisted Space Programmes

2108. SHRI CHADA SURESH REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.S. is eager to help India in the field of space research; and

(b) if so, the new programmes proposed in space technology with the cooperation of United States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) A Memorandum of Understanding exists providing for co-operation between the two countries in the field of space research.

(b) The programmes are in the area of earth and atmospheric sciences.

Sub-Contracting of Awarded Works

2109. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the foreign contractors are sub-contracting most of the awarded works;

(b) if so, whether it is permissible under the Rules of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI);

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the NHAI propose to devise better and more economical system of construction of its highways; and

(e) if so, the steps the NHAI propose to take to ensure reduction of the costs of highway construction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) to (c) Subcontracting upto 50% is permissible under Contract Agreement, which is based upon FIDIC Document. However, the contractor has to seek prior approval of the NHAI before subcontracting any part of work assigned to them. Many contractors including foreign contractors subcontract the work under the above provisions.

In case of BOT projects, the concessionaire may undertake construction work by himself or through a contractor.

(d) and (e) The following steps have been taken to ensure reduction of the costs of highway construction:

- (i) National Highways Authority of India (NHA) is engaging reputed Design Consultant for preparation of Detailed Project Report.
- (ii) The size of contract package is decided based on Techno-economic considerations. Substantial use of latest construction equipments, such as Hot Mix Plant, Crushers, Pavers, etc., also has helped in overall cost reduction.
- (iii) Mobilization and Equipment advances are given to contractors for better mobilization and to reduce cash flow problems for timely completion of projects.
- (iv) Locally available material and manpower are used to the extent feasible.
- (v) NHAI has adopted modern construction management technique for project implementation, which also leads to reduction in cost.

[Translation]

Shipping Services in Ganga

2110. SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH:
DR. M.P. JAISWAL:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Inland Waterways Authority of India proposes to start shipping services in Ganga;

(b) whether provision of terminals has been made for the purpose;

(c) if so, the details of the progress made in this regard, so far;

(d) whether the work is progressing as per the schedule; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) No, Sir. The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) does not run any shipping service.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Incentives to Telephone Manufacturers

2111. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:
SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have provided incentives for the expansion and development of the telephone manufacturing industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the average annual growth rate and annual turnover of the industry during each of the last three years;

(c) the percentage of dividend in the industry; and

(d) the annual growth rate of employment generation in the industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Government has provided number of incentives for the expansion and development of the telecom equipment manufacturing industry including telephone manufacturing industry. Some of the incentives are:

- (i) Manufacturing sector has declicensed and therefore, no license is required to undertake manufacture of telecom equipment. 100% foreign direct investment is allowed in this sector under automatic route through Reserve Bank of India (RBI). A technical know-how fee of US\$ 2 million

and royalty @ 5% for the domestic sales and @ 8% for the export are also allowed under automatic route.

- (ii) The Telecom Service Operators have been allowed to issue Form 'C' under Central Sales Tax enabling telephone manufacturing industry to avail concessional Sales Tax benefits.
- (iii) Electronics Hardware Technology Park Scheme had been modified to boost indigenous telecom manufacturing industry.

The total production of the telecom equipment industry during the years 1999-2000, 2000-2001 and 2001-2002 had been Rs. 10,760 crores, Rs. 12,271 crores and 15,437 crores respectively. The average annual growth in the industry had been around 20.0%. However, the database regarding the percentage of dividend and annual growth rate of employment generation in the telephone manufacturing industry is not centrally maintained.

[English]

Ayurvedic Heart Medicine

2112. DR. RAJESWARAMMA VUKKALA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Pune based Global Heart Foundation engaged in finding alternative therapies, especially non-invasive methods of treating heart ailments has claimed 80 percent success by using an approved Ayurvedic medicine 'Mydrops';

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Food and Drugs Administration, Maharashtra has given license to Shree Narayan Ayurvedic Pharmacy Pvt. Ltd. for the manufacture of Mydrops. As per report, the medicine is being used by M/s Global Heart Foundation, Pune. The Government is, however, not aware of the efficacy as claimed.

Study of Grain Handlers

2113. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Institute for Occupational Health has completed a study on grain handlers;

(b) if so, the details of the findings; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) The National Institute of Occupational Health, Ahmedabad has conducted a study entitled "Occupational Health Hazards of grain handling workers in West Godavari District of Andhra Pradesh". The main objective of the study is to assess the health status of the grain handling workers by clinical examination and to evaluate their pulmonary function and also to assess the workload during the grain handling work. A draft report has been prepared and is being placed before Scientific Working Committee of National Institute of Occupational Health, Ahmedabad (ICMR). The action taken by the Government depends upon the recommendations made by the Committee and the Indian Council of Medical Research.

Modern and Traditional Systems of Medicine

2114. SHRI V. VETRISELVAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to integrate modern and traditional systems of medicine; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The Government is already following the policy of integration. Certain Ayurvedic and Unani drugs have been introduced in the Reproductive and Child Health Programme. National Policy on Indian Systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy 2002 envisages integration of ISM&H in health care delivery system. A number of schemes have been approved for implementation in the Tenth Plan which aim at integration.

Computerisation of Post Offices

2115. SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Post offices in Punjab in which computers have been installed and the registration work started through computers during the last three years, location-wise; and

(b) the number of Post Offices likely to be computerized during the next financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) During the last three years, computers have been installed and registration work started through computers in 39 Post

Offices in Punjab. The location-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) Depending upon the completion of necessary formalities and availability of funds, more post offices would be covered during the next financial year.

Statement

Detail of Post Offices Computerised during last three years in Punjab Circle

Sl. No.	Name of Division	Name of the Post Office	Status of PO	Revenue District
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Bathinda	Bathinda City	SO	Bathinda
2.		Rampura Phul	SO	Bathinda
3.		Mansa	SO	Mansa
4.	Faridkot	Kotkapura	SO	Faridkot
5.	Ferozepur	Abohar	SO	Ferozepur
6.		Fazilka	SO	Ferozepur
7.		Zira	SO	Ferozepur
8.	Hoshiarpur	Urmur	SO	Hoshiarpur
9.		Mukerian	SO	Hoshiarpur
10.		Garhshankar	SO	Hoshiarpur
11.		Balachaur	SO	Nawan Shehar
12.	Jalandhar	GM Jalandhar	SO	Jalandhar
13.		Phillaur	SO	Nawan Shehar
14.		Nawan Shehar	MDG	Nawan Shehar
15.	Kapurthala	Sultanpur	SO	Kapurthala
16.		Nur Mehal	SO	Jalandhar
17.	Ludhiana (C)	Ind Col Ludhiana	SO	Ludhiana
18.		Jai Rd. Ludhiana	SO	Ludhiana
19.		Rajguru Nagar	SO	Ludhiana
20.		Janta Nagar	SO	Ludhiana
21.	Ludhiana (M)	Samrala	SO	Ludhiana
22.		Sahnewal	SO	Ludhiana
23.		Doraha	SO	Ludhiana

1	2	3	4	5
24.		Multan Pur Mandi	SO	Ludhiana
25.	Patiala	Samana	SO	Patiala
26.		Government Press. Pt.	SO	Patiala
27.		Sirhind	SO	Fatehgarh Sahib
28.	Ropar	Kharar	SO	Ropar
29.		Nangal	SO	Ropar
30.		Anandpur Sahib	SO	Ropar
31.		Morinda	SO	Ropar
32.	Sangrur	Dhuri	SO	Sangrur
33.		Sunam	SO	Sangrur
34.		Barnala	SO	Sangrur
35.	Chandigarh (UT)	Sec-36	SO	Chandigarh
36.		Sec-12	SO	Chandigarh
37.		Sec-30	SO	Chandigarh
38.		Mani Majra	SO	Chandigarh
39.		MHC Mani Majra	SO	Chandigarh

Promotion of Sports by Private Sector

2116. SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH:
DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH:

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether efforts are being made by banks, and other private sector organisations to promote sports in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) National Sports Policy, 2001 has laid emphasis on increasing private sector involvement in the development of sports in the country in the areas of resources mobilization, adoption of sports disciplines and sports persons, creation and maintenance of sports infrastructure etc. In consonance with these objectives, Government have started dialogue with premier Trade

and Industry Associations like Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) and Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) with a view to evolving a long term and sustainable partnership between Government and private Corporate sector for development of sports in the country. As a result of these dialogues, it has been agreed to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between FICCI and Sports Authority of India (SAI). Similarly, CII have agreed in principle to support five sporting disciplines through its member Corporate and to support concerned National Sports Federations and Organizations in preparation for the Athens Olympics, 2004 and the Beijing Olympics, 2008.

[Translation]

Vacant Posts of SCs/STs

2117. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether some posts of SCs/STs under various categories are vacant in various departments and undertakings under his Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(b) Does not arise.

(c) whether various categories of the employees working in these departments and undertakings have been promoted and fresh recruitment made during the last three years;

(c) Ministry of Disinvestment was set up in December, 1999. Most of the posts and personnel were transferred to it from other Ministries/Departments. The posts of officers are filled up through the process of Central Staffing Scheme. The posts in clerical cadres are filled up through the Staff Selection Commission. There is no Public Sector Undertaking under the administrative control of Ministry of Disinvestment. No promotion has so far been made in Ministry of Disinvestment including the offices under it.

(d) if so, the year-wise and category-wise fresh recruitments made under various categories during this period and the current year, till date;

(d) The details of fresh recruitment made by Ministry of Disinvestment including Disinvestment Commission for the last three years and the current year till date are as under. This recruitment is as per the prescribed model roster.

(e) whether the prescribed rules have been followed with regard to the recruitment and promotion of persons belonging to SCs/STs categories; and

(f) if not, the remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) No, Sir.

Year	Post	Recruited	SC	ST	OBC
2000	Peon	2	1	—	1
2001	Peon	6	1	—	1
2002	—	—	—	—	—
2003	Staff Car Driver	1	1	—	—

(e) Yes, Sir.

(d) whether the Government are aware of use of sub-standard materials in repair of roads during the last two years; and

(f) Does not arise.

(e) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon?

Length of National Highways

2118. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY:
PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT:
SHRI SAVSHIBHAI MAKWANA:

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) Details are at statement-I.

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(b) The State-wise data of total roads is available only up to 1998-99. The State-wise details of percentage of length of National Highways to total length of State roads based on the data as available are at statement-II.

(a) the total length of National Highways in the country upto February, 2003, State-wise;

(c) The expenditure details for the month of February 2003 are not available. The Details of expenditure for the last three years up to January, 2003 are at statement-III.

(b) the percentage of length of National Highways to total length of roads in the country during the last three years, State-wise;

(d) Use of sub-standard material is not allowed in works of National Highways including repairs.

(c) the amount spent on repair of National Highways during the last three years, upto February, 2003, State-wise;

(e) Does not arise.

Statement I**State-wise Length of National Highways in the Country upto February, 2003**

S.No.	Name of State	Total Length (in Kms.)
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	4002
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	392
3.	Assam	2836
4.	Bihar	3312
5.	Chandigarh	24
6.	Chhattisgarh	1810
7.	Delhi	72
8.	Goa	269
9.	Gujarat	2461
10.	Haryana	1357
11.	Himachal Pradesh	1188
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	823
13.	Jharkhand	1603
14.	Karnataka	3570

1	2	3
15.	Kerala	1440
16.	Madhya Pradesh	4664
17.	Maharashtra	3626
18.	Manipur	954
19.	Meghalaya	717
20.	Mizoram	927
21.	Nagaland	369
22.	Orissa	3301
23.	Pondicherry	53
24.	Punjab	1557
25.	Rajasthan	4597
26.	Sikkim	62
27.	Tamil Nadu	3758
28.	Tripura	400
29.	Uttaranchal	1075
30.	Uttar Pradesh	4942
31.	West Bengal	1951

Statement II**State-wise Details of Percentage of Length of National Highways to Total Length of Roads during the Last Three Years**

S.No.	State	Percentage of Length of National Highways to Total Length of Roads		
		1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2.01	2.16	2.23
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1.93	1.93	2.15
3.	Assam	3.09	3.15	3.31
4.	Bihar	3.44	3.96	5.50
5.	Chandigarh	1.31	1.31	1.31
6.	Delhi	0.26	0.26	0.26

1	2	3	4	5
7.	Goa	2.76	2.76	2.76
8.	Gujarat	2.40	2.40	2.64
9.	Haryana	4.70	4.70	4.70
10.	Himachal Pradesh	3.66	4.05	4.05
11.	Jammu & Kashmir	3.09	3.09	3.45
12.	Karnataka	2.13	2.23	2.35
13.	Kerala	0.68	0.83	0.97
14.	Madhya Pradesh	2.47	2.56	3.18
15.	Maharashtra	0.95	0.95	0.95
16.	Manipur	8.34	8.34	8.34
17.	Meghalaya	7.86	7.86	7.86
18.	Mizoram	17.68	17.68	19.13
19.	Nagaland	1.81	1.81	1.81
20.	Orissa	0.96	1.09	1.26
21.	Pondicherry	2.11	2.11	2.11
22.	Punjab	2.06	2.06	2.41
23.	Rajasthan	2.90	3.11	3.18
24.	Sikkim	3.35	3.35	3.35
25.	Tamil Nadu	2.40	2.40	2.45
26.	Tripura	2.57	2.57	2.57
27.	Uttar Pradesh	1.51	1.60	2.02
28.	West Bengal	2.39	2.46	2.46

Notes:

1. The length of total roads for States is as on 1998-99.
2. For the States of Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttaranchal, the details are clubbed with those of the States of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh respectively.

Statement-III*Expenditure on Maintenance and Repairs of National Highway during last Three Years*

(Rs. in Crores)

Sl.No.	Name of States/UTs	Expenditure		
		2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003 (Upto to Jan. 2003)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	50.98	40.16	16.29
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00

1	2	3	4	5
3.	Assam	37.57	39.90	13.58
4.	Bihar	55.93	37.87	24.62
5.	Chandigarh	0.28	0.10	0.12
6.	Chhattisgarh	9.35	24.20	11.88
7.	Delhi	0.82	0.00	0.04
8.	Goa	5.62	3.69	1.24
9.	Gujarat	21.83	21.70	5.04
10.	Haryana	14.67	17.40	4.00
11.	Himachal Pradesh	33.51	18.85	12.88
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	0.83	0.31	0.63
13.	Jharkhand	7.75	17.45	10.29
14.	Karnataka	45.84	40.40	25.15
15.	Kerala	33.31	35.72	23.00
16.	Madhya Pradesh	85.07	53.58	24.94
17.	Maharashtra	42.95	60.41	20.29
18.	Manipur	6.88	7.55	7.16
19.	Meghalaya	8.75	10.37	3.22
20.	Mizoram	7.53	3.48	2.07
21.	Nagaland	3.61	3.46	1.44
22.	Orissa	41.50	46.59	29.89
23.	Pondicherry	1.23	0.81	0.64
24.	Punjab	15.37	17.12	3.66
25.	Rajasthan	38.78	42.94	19.34
26.	Tamil Nadu	50.47	35.24	24.56
27.	Uttaranchal	55.94	53.46	21.92
28.	Uttar Pradesh	4.09	8.15	3.57
29.	West Bengal	22.95	42.92	6.74

Opening of Medical Institutes

2119. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether apart from Delhi a large number of patients from other parts of the country come to AIIMS for getting treatment;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to set up AIIMS like Institutes in various regions of the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A large number of patients from all over the country come to AIIMS for treatment.

(c) and (d) The issue is under consideration.

[*English*]

Reserves of Atomic Minerals

2120. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the last study conducted on the potential of Atomic Minerals in the country;

(b) the approximate reserves of Atomic Minerals in the country according to last assessment made in that regard; and

(c) the details of the plan formulated by the Government for their exploration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) The survey and exploration/ investigations for atomic minerals in the country is a continuing process being carried out since 1949 and the Atomic Minerals Directorate for Exploration and Research (AMD), a constituent unit under the Department of Atomic Energy is entrusted with this task.

(b) As a result of investigations, resources of Atomic Minerals (Minerals of Uranium, Thorium, Zirconium, Titanium etc.) have been identified as under:

I. Resources of Uranium:

About 92,000 Tonnes

II. Resources of Titanium (Ilmenite, Rutile), Zirconium (Zircon), Thorium (Monazite) and other associated minerals:

(Reserves in Million tonnes)

State	Ilmenite	Rutile	Zircon	Monazite	Garnet	Sillimanite
Kerala*	95.51	6.61	6.45	1.35	1.19	39.07
Tamil Nadu	97.91	4.82	8.35	1.73	24.38	21.09
Andhra Pradesh	100.10	4.42	4.43	2.29	48.99	47.02
Orissa	45.05	1.88	1.44	1.18	32.61	21.23
Others	9.85	0.20	0.47	1.44	0.08	1.75
Total	348.22	17.93	21.14	7.99	107.09	130.16

*Including resources in lake and sea bed.

(c) In order to further augment the atomic mineral resource base, the Department of Atomic Energy has formulated X Plan projects with a capital outlay of Rs. 107 crore.

[*Translation*]

Expenditure on Manasarovar Pilgrims

2121. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the amount spent by the Union Government on the pilgrims who visited Kailash Manasarovar during each of the last three years;

(b) whether the Union Government have enhanced the annual expenditure and facilities for these pilgrims; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) In the year 2000-2001, 2001-2002 and 2002-2003, MEA has spent Rs. 34.03 lakh, Rs. 29.95 lakh and Rs. 33.64 lakh respectively.

(b) and (c) The Kailash Manasarovar Yatra, along the traditional route across Lipulekh Pass in Pithoragarh District of Uttaranchal, is coordinated by the Ministry of External Affairs and conducted with the assistance of various Central and State Government agencies. Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam (KMVN) arranges board and lodging for Yatis on the Indian side. A Liaison Officer is attached to each batch of Yatis.

MEA provides Rs. 3,250/- per Yatri to KMVN to partially offset the expenditure incurred by the Yatis. Government provides free medical inspection and assistance, and security and escort cover upto Lipulekh Pass; insurance cover and communication links for the duration of the Yatra. Expenditure is also incurred to release advertisement for the Yatra in major national and regional newspapers and to provide V-Satellite phone to each Liaison Officer.

IT In Regional Language

2122. SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme to promote information technology in rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are aware that most of the population does not understand English; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to provide them the facility of information technology either in Hindi or other regional languages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) and (b) The

Department of Information Technology has undertaken a scheme of setting up Community Information Centres (CICs) at 483 of 487 Block headquarters in the seven North-East States and Sikkim for acceleration of socio-economic development of the region. The Scheme helps in bridging the digital divide by providing connectivity at the grass root levels in Distance Learning programme, Web browsing, employment opportunities, public health awareness, disaster management systems and for interfacing with the Government. The Department had established NICNET, which provides Network backbone and communication links in all district centres of the country and provide assistance to all the State and Central Government Departments towards Computerization. The Department had also established Four (4) Samadhan Kendras respectively, in Ramanathapuram (TN), Ujjain (MP), West Godavri Distt. (AP), and Chittrakoot (MP). In a recent initiative, the Department has taken further action towards developing IT application for the rural and poor people through Media Lab Asia for achieving the benefit of ICT technologies. This scheme is to address the grand challenges of poverty, literacy, education, health, employment and micro-entrepreneurship.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The Department of Information Technology has set up 13 resource Centres for Indian Language Technology Solutions in various States of the country, covering all the 18 constitutionally recognized Indian languages. Localization of Technology and Content creation in Hindi and its availability on Computer & Internet is being spearheaded in Hindi speaking States under a programme: Content Development & IT Localization Network (COIL-NET).

Utilisation of Funds for Telecommunication Services

2123. PROF. DUKHA BHAGAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the funds allocated by the Government for telecommunication services in rural areas have not been fully utilized;

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

(c) whether responsibility of the officers has been fixed in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the details of rural areas where telecommunication services have not been provided;

(f) whether any review has been undertaken in this regard;

(g) if so, the details thereof; and

(h) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Government has provided Rs. 720 crores in Jan., 2003 as loan in perpetuity without interest liability, for implementation of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) in 2001-02. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) has actually invested Rs. 6485.71 crores in rural telephony during the year 2001-2002.

(b) to (d) Do not arise in view of the (a) above.

(e) As on 31.1.2003 telephone facility has been provided in 504015 villages of the country by BSNL. BSNL has yet to provide telecom facility in 31074 revenue villages.

(f) to (h) BSNL Plans to provide telecom facility in these 31074 villages by 2003-2004 including 18202 Village Public Telephones (VPTs) on satellite media in remote and isolated areas within one year from the date of availability of funds by the Government.

[English]

Assistance for Dengue and Malaria

2124. SHRI SHASHI KUMAR:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether diseases like Dengue and Malaria are increasing in the country at an alarming rate;

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken for their eradication/prevention; and

(c) the details of the assistance provided for the eradication/prevention of the above diseases during each of the last three years and current year, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) As per reports received from the States, there has been an overall decline in the incidence of dengue and malaria during the year 2002 (upto October) as compared to that of 2001. For prevention and control of Dengue and Malaria, the strategies adopted include:—

- Early case detection and prompt treatment.
- Selective vector control.
- Promotion of personal protection methods.
- Early detection and containment of epidemics.
- Information, Education and Communication towards personal prevention and community participation.
- Institutional and Management Capacity Building, Trained Manpower Development and efficient Management Information Systems (MIS).
- Issuance of advance warning to States/UTs suggesting all the preventive and control measures.

(c) A Statement showing details of Central assistance provided for prevention and control of these diseases during each of the last three years and current year, State-wise is enclosed.

Statement

State-wise Distribution of Central Assistance during 1999-2000 to 2002-2003 under National Anti Malaria Programme (NAMP)

States/UTs	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-03 (B.E.)
1	2	3	4	5
Andhra Pradesh	663.50	644.13	408.88	157.53
Arunachal Pradesh	229.22	293.79	364.67	280.72
Assam	2616.73	2657.86	2377.47	1625.12

1	2	3	4	5
Bihar	578.66	83.20	525.94	77.71
Chhattisgarh	—	—	620.62	143.92
Goa	4.54	0.98	6.17	8.85
Gujarat	349.95	211.24	115.63	112.37
Haryana	160.95	78.35	18.42	60.88
Himachal Pradesh	92.45	89.06	36.78	3.06
Jammu & Kashmir	103.40	84.28	69.62	11.94
Jharkhand	—	—	585.62	147.45
Karnataka	229.29	233.36	369.55	176.28
Kerala	49.63	75.92	42.78	5.48
Madhya Pradesh	443.28	711.53	1090.25	160.49
Maharashtra	181.51	286.74	518.50	221.58
Manipur	219.53	235.72	275.28	121.36
Meghalaya	212.27	303.58	290.37	167.63
Mizoram	190.05	235.26	345.85	118.51
Nagaland	308.33	278.91	368.08	212.48
Orissa	436.17	547.64	824.12	122.43
Punjab	148.45	148.31	94.09	70.79
Rajasthan	1075.71	286.86	788.45	147.35
Sikkim	7.90	0.12	0.14	4.37
Tamil Nadu	114.91	133.90	85.72	180.11
Tripura	379.31	480.94	505.76	302.78
Uttar Pradesh	527.80	544.11	637.44	198.51
Uttaranchal	—	—	39.19	7.84
West Bengal	501.99	454.44	701.72	153.46
Delhi	20.10	100.45	89.57	97.39
Pondicherry	11.28	13.56	8.30	22.61
A&N Islands	111.28	231.73	220.78	217.85
Chandigarh	34.55	44.81	35.51	36.00
D&N Haveli	34.85	18.12	40.67	34.33
Daman & Diu	12.97	9.90	18.64	11.72
Lakshadweep	5.82	5.57	5.29	6.10
Total	10055.84	9524.39	12525.87	5427.00

*[Translation]***Concessions to BPL People**

2125. SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the people living below poverty line are being encouraged to set up small scale industries;

(b) if so, the details of concessions announced for them; and

(c) the number of such persons provided concessions for setting up small scale industries?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (DR. C.P. THAKUR):

(a) to (c) The Government facilitates promotion and development of small scale industries through the programmes and schemes relating to credit, technology, infrastructure, entrepreneurship and market development etc. These schemes and programmes are not group or location specific and are applicable to all prospective and existing entrepreneurs irrespective of their level of income including those living below poverty line.

Allocation of Funds to Rajasthan

2126. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI:
DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the allocation made by the Union Government to the Rajasthan Government under the Central Road Fund and the National Highways Scheme during the last three years;

(b) the details of projects being implemented under the Central Road Fund during the said period, year-wise;

(c) whether the State Government has utilised that amount fully;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the funds likely to be allocated to Rajasthan during the next financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) Details of funds allocated under CRF and National Highways Scheme for State of Rajasthan during last three years are as under:

Year	CRF Allocation (Rs. in crores)	NH(o) Allocation (Rs. in crores)
2000-01	75.82	83.31
2001-02	75.84	83.50
2002-03	76.71	82.50

(b) Year-wise details of CRF works approved during last three years including current year are as under:

Year	Number	Amount (Rs. in crores)
2000-01	Nil	Nil
2001-02	74	109.31
2002-03	83	111.60
Total	157	220.91

(c) to (e) The State Government of Rajasthan has utilized Rs. 139.64 crores upto January, 2003. Further 82 works amounting to Rs. 110.83 crores are in progress.

(f) Funds of Rs. 73.39 crores are likely to be allocated to Rajasthan for the next financial year.

*[English]***Allotment of ISD/STD Booths**

2127. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether several ISD/STD Booths have been allotted at Howrah Station of Eastern Rly. without requisite administrative approval;

(b) if so, whether the Government have received any complaint in this regard;

(c) the details of all the ISD/STD Booths being operated at Howrah Station along with the names and educational qualifications of the booth operators;

(d) whether any priority is given to educated unemployed SC/ST/OBC applicants in allotting STD Booths;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the details of the allotments made to the said categories during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. However, one complaint was received regarding allotment of space at Howrah Railway Station.

(c) The details of the franchisees of ISD/STD Booths being operated at Howrah railway station is given in the Statement enclosed.

(d) to (f) As per the existing policy, STD/ISD PCOs are allotted to all the applicants, who are 18 years of age and above, on first come first served basis. Where there is waiting list for STD/ISD PCOs the order of priority for allotment of PCOs is war-widows/dependants, SC/ST, handicapped persons and ex-servicemen. Separate list of allotment for these categories is not maintained. No separate priority is given to applicants from OBC category.

Statement

Sl.No.	Name of the Franchisee	Educational Qualification
1.	Shri Gopal Shaw	Class-VI
2.	Shri Uttam Chatterjee	H.S.
3.	Shri Arnab Dasgupta	B. Com (Hon.)
4.	Shri Ranjit Kr. Das	B. Com.
5.	Shri Deepak Samanta	Madhyamik
6.	Smt. Arati Chowdhury	B. Com.
7.	Shri Jayanta Sen	Madhyamik
8.	Shri Upendra Prasad	Intermediate
9.	Shri Sainik Aramgarh	Not available
10.	Shri Bhola Nath Sahal	Class-VIII

[Translation]

Postal Services in North Eastern States

2128. SHRI BHIM DAHAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of complaints received regarding unsatisfactory postal services in North Eastern States, particularly Sikkim during the last three years;

(b) the nature of complaints;

(c) whether any negligence on the part of officers and employees have also come to the notice while enquiring into such complaints; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the Government against those officers and employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) The number of complaints received regarding unsatisfactory postal services in North Eastern States and Sikkim during the last three years is as under:

Year	North Eastern States	Sikkim
1999-2000	18,835	Nil
2000-2001	19,512	Nil
2001-2002	19,999	01

(b) (i) In North Eastern States, the complaints received were of various nature like non-receipt of acknowledgements, delay/non-delivery/loss of Registered letters/Parcels, delay in payment of money orders and delay in transfer of Savings Bank Accounts.

(ii) In Sikkim, one complaint relating to non-delivery of postal article by Gramin Dak Sevak (GDS) was received.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d)

North Eastern States	Sikkim
30 officials were punished with withholding of increment, censure, recovery of loss, removal from service and debarmment from appearing in department examinations.	1 Gramin Dak Sevak was put off duty.

[English]

Insurance of Nuclear Plants

2129. SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal of the Nuclear Power Corporation of India regarding insurance of its nuclear plants has been rejected by the New India Assurance Corporation;

(b) if so, whether any reason was given by the Assurance Corporation for rejecting the proposal;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the NPC of India has re-submitted its proposal after complying with the requirements demanded by the Assurance Corporation;

(e) if so, whether the fresh proposal has been accepted by the Corporation; and

(f) if not, the steps taken by the NPC for getting its nuclear plants insured?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (f) The New India Assurance Corporation has expressed difficulties in insurance of Nuclear Power Stations in view of non-availability of 'reinsurance support' from foreign reinsurers. At present, the Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited is holding discussions with various insurance companies in India, including the New India Assurance Corporation, for insurance of its Nuclear Power Stations.

Directions to Private Medical Colleges

2130. SHRI K. MURALEEDHARAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have given any directions to the Private Medical Colleges regarding the percentage of seats under Merit/Management quota;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that the Private Managements do not charge hefty fees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The admission process in all private medical colleges is being regulated as per Regulations of Medical Council of India according to which, at least 50% of the seats in private medical colleges are to be given on merit basis. The remaining 50% seats are filled in payment category. 15% seat of total intake capacity of the college are carved out from the payment category to be filled up by the Management under NRI/Management quota. However, the eleven Judge bench of Supreme Court of India had recently given a judgement on admission process and fee in aided and unaided medical institutions.

(c) The Central Government has been fixing their upper ceiling of fee for merit and payment seats in private medical colleges and the actual fee within that ceiling is to be fixed by the respective State Governments. All private medical colleges are required to charge fee fixed by the respective State Governments.

Reservation Policy

2131. SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have strictly followed the reservation policy in providing jobs in various Departments of his Ministry in as far as the Class I and Class II posts are concerned;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the said posts designated for SCs/STs and OBCs are lying vacant;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the remedial steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, The Ministry has been strictly following the reservation policy. The number of officers in Class I and Class II categories, belonging to SC, ST and OBC categories, in the Ministry, excluding the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) and the Central Passport Office (CPO), are given below.

Number of Officers under SC, ST & OBC categories in Class I and II posts

Class	Total number of posts	Number of officers in			
		General Category	Scheduled Caste (SC)	Scheduled Tribe (ST)	Other Backward Castes (OBC)
Class I	827	626	118	50	33
Class II	1893	1453	281	101	58

The information in respect of the ICCR and the Central Passport Organisation (CPO) is being compiled, and will be placed on the Table of the House.

(c) and (d) Yes.

The details of unfilled vacancies in Class I and II posts is given below:

Details of Unfilled vacancies:

Class	Unfilled Vacancies in Scheduled Caste (SC) category	Unfilled vacancies in Scheduled Tribe (ST) category	Unfilled vacancies under Other Backward Castes (OBC* &) category
Class I	Nil	8	Nil
Class II	Nil	Nil	Nil

Eight (8) posts in the ST category are lying vacant for want of eligible candidates.

The information in respect of the ICCR and the Central Passport Organisation (CPO) is being compiled and will be placed on the Table of the House.

(e) The unfilled vacancies will be filled through Limited Departmental Examination (LDE) held by Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and by promotion.

Restrictions on Suppliers

2132. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to impose restrictions to overseas suppliers in regard to assembling and manufacture of handsets in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the details about the export of Telecom equipment during the last three years;

(e) whether a private company had ordered five million handsets from a Korean manufacture; and

(f) if so, the details thereof indicating the problems the Indian manufacturers are facing to produce handsets locally?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) No, Sir. Telecom equipment manufacturing sector, including assembly of handsets has been delicensed and therefore,

there is no restriction on the manufacture of such items. In the case of overseas suppliers, investment in this area is governed by the foreign direct investment (FDI) policy of the Government. 100% FDI is allowed in the telecom equipment manufacturing sector under automatic route.

(d) The details of export of telecom equipment during the last three years are as under:-

(Rupees in Crores)

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Exports	180	450	150

(e) The information is not centrally maintained.

(f) The Government has already given a number of incentives to encourage manufacture of handsets locally which include import or parts, components and accessories of mobile hand sets including cellular phones at zero custom duty. As this is a delicensed sector, market forces and economy of scale will decide local manufacture of hand sets.

Eye Banks

2133. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the donors, who declare to donate their eyes after death are more in number on paper than the actual number of eyes received by the Eye Banks;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any specific measures have been taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to motivate people to donate their eyes; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The pledges made by the donors to donate their eyes after death are much more than the actual number of eyes received by the Eye banks. In the country, every year about 2 lakhs eye are pledged while the actual collection of corneas is about 21 thousand per year.

(c) and (d) Annual "eye donation fortnight" from 25th August to 8th September and Hospital Cornea Retrieval Programmes are being organized to motivate the people for donating the eyes.

South Asian Federation Games

2134. SHRI PRABODH PANDA: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ninth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games are to begin from March 29, 2003 in Pakistan;

(b) if so, whether India will not participate in ninth SAF Games; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Keeping in view the security perception, Government has advised the Indian Olympic Association that Indian Contingent should not participate in the SAF Games.

Entrance Test for Medical Students

2135. SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to increase the number of attempts with regard to the Medical Entrance tests;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to allow the students to take the Entrance test in their respective mediums in which they have studied; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) The Medical Entrance Examinations are conducted by the Universities/colleges in the States as per their own policies.

However, under the 'Scheme' of All India Entrance Examinations devised and approved by the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India for admission to Under Graduate and Post Graduate courses, there is no bar on the number of attempts a candidate can make. The Hon'ble Court has also mentioned in the 'Scheme' that since the medium of instruction in the MBBS/BDS and Post-graduate courses is in English and the entire medical education is being imparted in English language throughout the country, the All India Entrance Examinations should be held in English language.

CGHS Dispensaries/Hospitals in Chennai

2136. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government received representations from the Central Government Employees Coordination Committee, Chennai regarding the functioning of the CGHS dispensaries/hospitals in the States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) CGHS Chennai has received a representation dated 23.10.2002 from the Central Govt. Employees Welfare Coordination Committee, Chennai, regarding various issues pertaining to CGHS. The issues broadly raised in the representation are as under:

(a) Recognition of more hospitals as referral hospitals.

(b) Lack of hygiene in the Anna Nagar CGHS dispensary.

(c) Enhancing the rate of reimbursement.

(d) Reallocation of CGHS dispensaries.

(e) Delay in supply of drugs by the CGHS.

(c) Fresh recognition of Private hospitals/diagnostic centres along with revised ceiling rates for various medical procedures/tests/investigations under CGHS Chennai has already been circulated to all Ministries/Departments of the Govt. of India vide Department of Health's O.M. No. S-11011/35/2001-CGHS/Desk-II/CGHS(P) dated 4.10.2002.

As regards other issues raised in the representation, the Additional Director, CGHS, Chennai has already initiated necessary action for their redressal which is to be discussed at a meeting.

Irregularities in Central Council of Homoeopathy

2137 SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether irregularities in the functioning of the Central Council of Homoeopathy have come to the notice of the Government;

(b) if so, whether any representation in this regard has been received from various associations/individuals/MPs as on date;

(c) if so, the details of action taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) whether an inquiry/CBI inquiry into the affairs of the Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH) has been ordered;

(e) if so, the progress made in this regard;

(f) whether the office bearers of the Central Council of Homoeopathy (CCH) against whom complaints have been received are still continuing in their positions; and

(g) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Complaints about irregularities in the functioning of the Central Council of Homoeopathy have been received by the Government.

(c) to (e) The allegations are under examination.

(f) Yes, Sir.

(g) The complaints are under examination.

As per provision made in section 7(1) of Homoeopathy Central Council Act, 1973, the Members shall continue to hold office till the successor is elected/nominated. Election process has already been initiated.

Non-availability of Equipment

2138. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether PSUs *i.e.* BSNL and MTNL are facing problems in procuring equipment due to lengthy tendering process;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether both the PSUs are unable to give quality services to the consumers as compared to private players due to non-availability of equipment in time;

(d) if so, whether a meeting with CMD of these PSUs has been held recently; and

(e) if so, the strategy chalked out to sort out the problems of these PSUs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, the procurement of material is being made by PSUs *i.e.* BSNL and MTNL through prescribed tendering procedure, which does take some additional time. However, due care is taken by way of advance and proper planning to offset the delay.

(c) The quality of services to the consumers is in no way compromised as better quality of equipment is procured through transparent process.

(d) and (e) Periodical meetings are held to review the performance of PSUs. PSUs are taking steps to simplify procurement procedures to reduce delays.

Foreign Funded Hospitals

2139. PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM:
DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the WHO, World Bank and other foreign financial institutions have provided financial assistance for the up-gradation of rural hospitals in the country during the last three years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Automatic Telephone Exchanges

2140. SHRI MANSINH PATEL:
SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of automatic and modern telephone exchanges set up in the country during the last three years, State-wise and location-wise;

(b) the number of such exchanges likely to be set up during the current calendar year, State-wise and location-wise;

(c) the details of such telephone exchanges whose capacity got augmented during the current financial year; and

(d) the names of the telephone exchanges where telephone connections have been provided to all the waitlisted persons?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): Reply in respect of BSNL (Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited) (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Reply in respect of MTNL (Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited)

(a) Number of exchanges set up during the last three years in MTNL Delhi & Mumbai are given in statement-I and II respectively.

(b) Number of exchanges set up during 2002 and current year in MTNL Delhi & Mumbai are given in statement-III and IV respectively.

(c) Details of exchanges where capacity has been augmented during current financial year in MTNL Delhi & Mumbai are given in statement-V and VI respectively.

(d) In MTNL all telephone connections have been provided to all applicants in the waiting list as per the commercial policy. However, there are few scattered/individuals localities where few advice notes are pending due to non-availability of underground cable pairs.

Statement I

Main/RSU Exchanges Commissioned Year-wise

Sl. No.	Main Exchange	Sl. No.	RSU
1999-2000			
1.	Tis Hazari (D-2)	1.	Zafraabad
2.	Janpath (D-6)	2.	M. Vihar-III
3.	Idgah (D-3)	3.	Bawana
4.	BCP (D-2)	4.	Savitri Nagar
5.	Badli (D-1)	5.	Mahipalpur
6.	Rohini Sec. III (D-1)	6.	Kanjhawala
7.	Nehru Place (D-6)	7.	C. Place
8.	R. Garden (D-6)	8.	Delhi Stock Exchange
2000-2001			
1.	Lodhi Road (D-2)	1.	Mehrauli
2.	Hauz Khas (D-2)	2.	Gulabi Bagh
3.	Karol Bagh (D-6)	3.	Dwarka
		4.	Asola
		5.	Nangloi-II

Main/RSU Nodes Commissioned During 2001-2002

Sl. No.	Main Exchange	Sl. No.	RSU
1.	Tuglakabad (D-1)	1.	Sachivalya
2.	Yamuna Vihar (D-1)	2.	Begam Pur
3.	Karkardooma (D-1)	3.	Chhattarpur Pahari
4.	Dwarka (20-D)	4.	Rampuri
5.	Dwarka (D-8)	5.	CCI
6.	Hari Nagar (D-1)	6.	Sunlight
		7.	Gandhi Nagar
		8.	Krishna Nagar
		9.	CBD Shahdara
		10.	West Patel Nagar-I
		11.	Roshan Mandi
		12.	Uttam Nagar
		13.	Hastsal
		14.	SPC Dwarka
		15.	COMSAT MAX Housing
		16.	Inderpuri
		17.	Jahangir Puri
		18.	CR Park
		19.	Okhla Phase-II
		20.	Wazirpur Indl. Area
		21.	K.P. Plaza
		22.	CV Block
		23.	Burari
		24.	DMRC
		25.	Akashwani Bhawan
		26.	West Patel Nagar-II
		27.	Bakhatawar Pur

Statement II**New Exchanges Commissioned During Last 3 Years in MTNL Mumbai**

Sl. No.	Exchange	Pare Unit	Capacity in K type		Gros cap.	SCR cap	WR cap.	WNR cap.	Net cap.	Date of Comm.
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
EXCHANGES COMMISSIONED DURING 1999-2000										
1.	Khar-2		0.000	4.000 OCB	4000	0	0	0	4000	29.07.99
2.	Tagore Ngr. RSU	PW1	0.000	7.000 OCB	7000	0	0	0	7000	24.08.99
3.	Marol-1		0.000	2.250 OCB	2250	0	0	0	2250	09.09.99
4.	Sita Estate RSU	MK3	0.000	5.500 OCB	5500	0	0	0	5500	08.09.99
5.	Ghatkoper-1		0.000	3.000 E-10B	3000	0	0	0	3000	15.11.99
6.	Prabhadevi-2		0.000	28.000 EWSD	28000	0	0	0	28000	18.12.99
7.	Sakinaka RLU-2	MR1	0.000	1.000 E-10B	1000	0	0	0	1000	02.02.00
8.	Samta Nagar-2		0.000	3.000 OCB	3000	0	0	0	3000	24.03.00
9.	IIT Powai RSU	PW1	0.000	2.000 OCB	2000	0	0	0	2000	28.03.00
10.	CorDect (MRL)		0.000	1.000 WLL	1000	0	0	0	1000	30.03.00
11.	IL&FS RSU	BD3	0.000	1.000 OCB	1000	0	0	0	1000	31.03.00
EXCHANGES COMMISSIONED DURING 2000-2001										
1.	Mahape RSU	TB2	0.000	2.000 OCB	2000	0	0	0	2000	01.06.00
2.	Godrej Soaps RSU	PW1	0.000	1.000 OCB	1000	0	0	0	1000	30.06.00
3.	Wockhardt RSU	BD3	0.000	0.500 OCB	500	0	0	0	500	11.07.00
4.	Nerul-1		0.000	15.000 OCB	15000	0	0	0	15000	29.09.00
5.	Mazgaon-2		0.000	6.750 OCB	6750	0	0	0	6750	30.09.00
6.	Fountain-1		0.000	12.000 EWSD	12000	0	0	0	12000	30.12.00
7.	Wipro RSU	MR1	0.000	1.000 OCB	1000	0	0	0	1000	28.02.01
8.	Jogeshwari-1		0.000	6.000 EWSD	6000	0	0	0	6000	31.03.01
9.	Versova-3		0.000	6.000 EWSD	6000	0	0	0	6000	31.03.01
10.	Union Park RSU	MK3	0.000	1.000 OCB	1000	0	0	0	1000	31.03.01
11.	Kashi Mira RDLU	BH1	0.000	5.000 EWSD	5000	0	0	0	5000	31.03.01
12.	Uttan RDLU	BH1	0.000	3.000 EWSD	3000	0	0	0	3000	31.03.01
13.	BSE RSU	CT1	0.000	3.500 OCB	3500	0	0	0	3500	31.03.01
14.	MMRDA RSU	BD3	0.000	2.750 OCB	2750	0	0	0	2750	31.03.01

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
EXCHANGES COMMISSIONED DURING 2001-2002 (MAIN & REMOTE EXCHANGES)										
1.	Wagle Estate-2		0.000	5.000 EWSD	5000	0	0	0	5000	29.09.01
2.	Panvel-2		0.000	2.000 EWSD	2000	0	0	0	2000	31.10.01
3.	Marol Darpan-1		0.000	18.000 EWSD	18000	0	0	0	18000	19.01.02
4.	Ghatkopar-5		0.000	6.000 EWSD	6000	0	0	0	6000	31.01.02
5.	Cooperage-2		0.000	6000 EWSD	6000	0	0	0	6000	27.03.02
6.	Wadala-1		0.000	4.800 5ESS	4800	0	0	0	4800	28.03.02
7.	Wori-1		0.000	6.000 EWSD	6000	0	0	0	6000	30.03.02
8.	Bandra-1		0.000	9.000 EWSD	9000	0	0	0	9000	31.03.02
9.	Mulund-1		0.000	5.000 EWSD	5000	0	0	0	5000	31.03.02
10.	Saki Vihar-1		0.000	12.000 5ESS	12000	0	0	0	12000	31.03.02
11.	Dahisar-1		0.000	24.000 5ESS	24000	0	0	0	24000	31.03.02
12.	Mankhurd-1		0.000	5.000 EWSD	5000	0	0	0	5000	31.03.02
13.	NSE RSU	BD3	0.000	1.000 OCB	1000	0	0	0	1000	25.04.01
14.	Times of India RSU	CT1	0.000	0.750 OCB	750	0	0	0	750	15.05.01
15.	Met RSU	BD3	0.000	0.500 OCB	500	0	0	0	500	30.06.01
16.	Hiranandani RDLU	WE2	0.000	1.800 EWSD	1800	0	0	0	1800	15.10.01
17.	Lokmanya Nagar RDL	WE2	0.000	7.000 EWSD	7000	0	0	0	7000	31.10.01
18.	JNPT RDLU	PV2	0.000	3.000 EWSD	3000	0	0	0	3000	31.10.01
19.	Sahayog Complex	WE2	0.000	3.000 EWSD	3000	0	0	0	3000	22.11.01
20.	Income Tax RDLU	VP4	0.000	3.584 EWSD	3584	0	0	0	3584	14.12.01
21.	Nirlon RDLU	MD1	0.000	12.000 EWSD	12000	0	0	0	12000	19.01.02
22.	Tata Technopolis	MD1	0.000	10.000 EWSD	10000	0	0	0	10000	31.01.02
23.	Magathane RDLU	BO1	0.000	12.000 EWSD	12000	0	0	0	12000	28.02.02
24.	Shimpoli RDLU	BO1	0.000	10.000 EWSD	10000	0	0	0	10000	28.02.02
25.	Deep Plaza (Kurla)	GH5	0.000	12.000 EWSD	12000	0	0	0	12000	28.02.02
26.	BPCL RDLU		0.000	0.500 EWSD	500	0	0	0	500	30.03.02
27.	Glory House RDLU	VR1	0.000	9.000 EWSD	9000	0	0	0	9000	31.03.02
EXCHANGES COMMISSIONED DURING 2002-2003 (MAIN & REMOTE EXCHANGES)										
1.	RCF CNE	S12	0.000	0.500	500	0	0	0	500	19.04.02
2.	Chembur-2		0.000	1.500 OCB	1500	0	0	0	1500	31.05.02
3.	Bhandup RSU	MU4	0.000	3.000 OCB	3000	0	0	0	3000	31.05.02

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
4.	Bayer CNE	TC2	0.000	0.250 OCB	250	0	0	0	250	10.05.02
5.	Vakola-1		0.000	11.500 EWSD	11500	0	0	0	11500	07.06.02
6.	HLL CNE	MZ2	0.000	0.256 OCB	256	0	0	0	256	29.06.02
7.	Global RSU	TB2	0.000	1.000 OCB	1000	0	0	0	1000	31.08.02
8.	Provident Fund RD	BD1	0.000	6.640 EWSD	6640	0	0	0	6640	21.09.02
9.	Comsatmax RSU	TB2	0.000	0.500 OCB	500	0	0	0	500	24.09.02
10.	CorDECT Mankhurd		0.000	1.000 WLL	1000	0	0	0	1000	25.09.02
11.	CorDECT Bandra		0.000	1.000 WLL	1000	0	0	0	1000	25.09.02
12.	CorDECT Cherai		0.000	1.000 WLL	1000	0	0	0	1000	15.08.02
13.	CorDECT Gokuldharm		0.000	1.000 WLL	1000	0	0	0	1000	15.08.02
14.	Riverwood RDLU	WE2	0.000	0.500 EWSD	500	0	0	0	500	27.09.02
15.	Mazagaon-3		0.000	2.000 EWSD	2000	0	0	0	2000	30.09.02
16.	ATC Darpan RDLU	MD1	0.000	2.000 EWSD	2000	0	0	0	2000	10.10.02
17.	Sakinaka RSU	MR5	0.000	1.000 OCB	1000	0	0	0	1000	19.10.02
18.	Tata Power CNE	MR3	0.000	0.250 CNE	250	0	0	0	250	03.01.03
19.	Cumbala Hill-1		0.000	20.000 OCB	20000	0	0	0	20000	15.01.03

Statement III*Main/RSU Proposed in 2002*

Sl. No.	Main Exchange	Sl. No.	RSU
1	2	3	4
1.	Hauz Khas	1.	Sachivalya
2.	Tuglakabad (D-1)	2.	North Block
3.	Y. Vihar (D-1)	3.	Begampur
4.	Karkardooma (D-1)	4.	Mehrauli
5.	Shakti Nagar (D-7)	5.	Chhattarpur Pahari
6.	Dwarka 20-D (D-1)	6.	Rampuri
7.	Dwarka 8 (D-1)	7.	CCI
8.	Hari Nagar (D-1)	8.	Sunlight
9.	Paschim Vihar (D-1)	9.	Gandhi Nagar
10.	Krishna Nagar		

1	2	3	4
11.	CBD Shahadra		
12.	West Patel Nagar		
13.	Roshan Mandi		
14.	Ultam Nagar		
15.	Hastsal		
16.	Dakshin Pitampura		

New RSUs Proposed for Year 2002-2003

Sl.No.	RSUs	1	2
1	2		
1.	Jamia Millia RSU	11.	Sangam Vihar RSU
2.	North Block RSU	12.	Saurav Vihar RSU
3.	Paharganj RSU	13.	Molarband RSU
4.	Kamla Nagar RSU	14.	West Vinod Nagar RSU
5.	Roshanara Road RSU	15.	Adarsh Nagar RSU
6.	Chandrawal RSU	16.	Budh Vihar RSU
7.	AIIMS RSU	17.	South Patel Nagar RSU
8.	Junapur RSU	18.	Naraina RSU
9.	Mandi RSU	19.	Chaukhandi RSU
10.	Greater Kailash RSU	20.	Kadipur RSU
		21.	Swaroop Nagar RSU
		22.	Kishan Ganj RSU

Statement IV*New Telephone Exchanges Proposed during the Year 2003*

Sl.No.	Name of Exchange	Type	Gross Cap.
1	2	3	4
MAIN EXCHANGES			
1.	Cumballa Hill-1	OCB	20000
2.	Charkop-1	OCB	15000
Sub Total			35000
REMOTE EXCHANGES			
1.	Santa Cruz (E) RDLU	EWSD	10000

1	2	3	4
2.	Saki Naka RSU	OCB	4000
3.	Charkop	EWSD	12000
4.	Chuna Bhatti RDLU	EWSD	5500
5.	Vashi Sector-19 RSU	OCB	4000
6.	Uran RDLU	EWSD	6000
7.	Parsik Hill RSU	OCB	2000
8.	Bhandup Village Road	EWSD	10000
9.	Garodia Nagar OCB	OCB	8000
10.	Kopri	OCB	4000
11.	Tata Power CNE	OCB	250
Sub Total			55750
Grand Total			100750

Statement V

Exchanges where Capacities has been augmented during 2002-2003

Sl.No.	Name of Exchange	Augmented capacity
1	2	3
1.	SPG Dwarka (RSU)	+0.25K(0.75-1K)
2.	Jahangirpuri (RSU)	+5K(5-10K)
3.	Dwarka (20D) D-I Main	+8K(2-10K)
4.	Y. Vihar (D-1) Main	+10K(2-12K)
5.	West Patel Nagar-II (RSU)	+5K(7-12K)
6.	Hari Nagar D-1 Main	+8K(11-19K)
7.	Palam (RSU)	+1K(4-5K)
8.	C. Place (RSU)	+2K(6-8K)
9.	Tuglakabad D-1 Main	+8K(5-13K)
10.	Nangloi-II (RSU)	+1K(6-7K)
11.	Uttam Nagar (RSU)	+2K(11-13K)

1	2	3
12.	Burari (RSU)	+1.K(7-8K)
13.	HHN Sec. VI (RSU)	+0.5K(1-1.5K)
14.	Janpath D-6 Main	+10K(15.75-25.75K)
15.	Chanakyapuri (D-1) Main	+2K(12-14K)
16.	Janakpuri D-2 Main	+1K(15.5-16.5K)
17.	Hastsal (RSU)	+1K(8-9K)
18.	K.P. Plaza (RSU)	+7.184K(8-15.184K)
19.	Jorbagh (D-2) Main	+14K(6-20K)
20.	Najafgarh (RSU)	+2.5K(9.362-11.862K)
21.	Badli (D-1) Main	+0.5K(11-11.5K)
22.	Narela (RSU)	+1K(5.5-6.5K)
23.	Hauz Khas (RSU)	+0.75K(19.5-20.25K)
24.	M. Vihar-I (RSU)	+2.5K(4-6.5K)
25.	M. Vihar-III (RSU)	+1.5K(16-17.5K)
26.	Karol Bagh (D-6) Main	+0.75K(25-25.75K)

Statement VI**Exchanges augmented During 2002-2003**

S.L.	Exchange	Parent Unit	Capacity in K		Type	Gross Cap.	SCR Cap.	WR Cap.	NET Cap.	Date of Comm.
			From	to						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
APRIL 2002										
1.	Ghatkpoar-5		6.000	7.000	EWSD	1000	0	0	1000	01.04.02
2.	Uran CNE	TB2	1.000	1.250	OCB	250	0	0	250	06.04.02
3.	Belapur RSU	TB2	4.000	4.250	OCB	250	0	0	250	10.04.02
4.	Union Park RSU	MK3	2.000	3.000	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	20.04.02
5.	Diva Rly. Stn.	TC3	0.500	1.500	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	25.04.02
6.	Wagle Estate-2		5.000	6.000	EWSD	1000	0	0	1000	30.04.02
	Total					4500	0	0	4500	
MAY 2002										
1.	Union Park RSU	MK2	3.000	5.000	OCB	2000	0	0	2000	25.05.02
2.	Rabale RSU+CNE	TB2	6.506	7.506	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	27.05.02
	Total					3000	0	0	3000	
JUNE 2002										
1.	Belapur RSU	TB2	4.250	5.250	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	05.06.02
2.	Rabale RSU+CNE	TB2	7.506	8.506	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	14.06.02
3.	Nerul-1		20.500	21.500	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	27.06.02
4.	Nirton RDLU	MD1	12.000	13.600	CWSD	1600	0	0	1600	29.06.02
	Total					4600	0	0	4600	
	Qtr1 Cumu. Total					12100	0	0	12100	
JULY 2002										
1.	Nirton RDLU	MD1	13.600	14.000	EWSD	400	0	0	400	17.07.02
2.	Santacruz RSU	KH2	12.800	14.800	OCB	2000	0	0	2000	28.07.02
	Total					2400	0	0	2400	
AUGUST 2002										
1.	Marol Darpan-1		18.000	19.000	EWSD	1000	0	0	1000	02.08.02
2.	Bhandup RSU	MU4	3.000	12.000	OCB	9000	0	0	9000	14.08.02
3.	Marol Darpan-1		19.000	20.500	EWSD	1500	0	0	1500	17.08.02
4.	Glory House RDLU	VR1	9.000	12.000	EWSD	3000	0	0	3000	17.08.02
5.	Sion-2		32.250	34.950	OCB	2700	0	0	2700	26.08.02

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
6.	Marol Darpan-1		20.500	21.000	EWSD	500	0	0	500	28.08.02
7.	Lokmanya Nagar RDLU	WE2	7.000	8.000	EWSD	1000	0	0	1000	28.08.02
8.	Thane Cherai-3		12.000	14.000	OCB	2000	0	0	2000	29.08.02
9.	City-1		21.500	39.500	OCB	18000	0	0	18000	30.08.02
	Total					38700	0	0	38700	
SEPTEMBER 2002										
1.	Rabale RSU+Simence	TB2	8.506	9.506	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	21.09.02
2.	Marol Darpan-1		21.000	22.500	EWSD	1500	0	0	1500	21.09.02
3.	Marol Darpan-1		22.500	23.000	EWSD	500	0	0	500	27.09.02
	Total					3000	0	0	3000	
	Qtr2 Cumu. Total					44100	0	0	44100	
OCTOBER 2002										
1.	Turbhe-2+3CNE		16.250	16.750	OCB	500	0	0	500	14.10.02
2.	Miraroad RSU	KV4	15.000	16.500	OCB	1500	0	0	1500	14.10.02
3.	Vashi RLY Stn RSU	TU2	1.000	1.500	OCB	500	0	0	500	26.10.02
	Total					2500	0	0	2500	
NOVEMBER 2002										
1.	Union Park RSU	MK3	5.000	12.000	OCB	7000	0	0	7000	19.11.02
2.	Panvel-2		2.000	4.000	EWSD	2000	0	0	2000	26.11.02
3.	Nerul-1		21.500	22.000	OCB	500	0	0	500	27.11.02
4.	Khar-2		8.000	30.000	OCB	22000	0	0	22000	28.11.02
	Total					31500	0	0	31500	
DECEMBER 2002										
1.	Sakinaka RSU	MRS	1.000	2.000	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	13.12.02
2.	Fountain-1		15.500	25.500	EWSD	10000	0	0	10000	28.12.02
	Total					11000	0	0	11000	
	Qtr3 Cumu. Total					45000	0	0	45000	
JANUARY 2003										
1.	Sakinaka RSU		2.000	3.000	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	18.01.03
2.	Sion-2		34.950	55.950	OCB	21000	0	0	21000	24.01.03
3.	Provident Fund RDLU		6.640	8.000	EWSD	1360	0	0	1360	25.01.03
4.	Sakinaka RSU		3.000	4.000	OCB	1000	0	0	1000	28.01.03
5.	Mankhurd-1		5.000	22.000	EWSD	17000	0	0	17000	30.01.03
	Total					41360	0	0	41360	
	Qtr4 Cumu. Total					41360	0	0	41360	
	Cummulative Total					142560	0	0	142560	

*[English]***Expansion of Internet Services**

2141. SHRI SHIVAJI MANE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to encourage internet services for promoting Information Technology in the country;

(b) if so, the names of places which are proposed to be linked by an International Gateway Hub, State-wise;

(c) by when approval is likely to be accorded in this regard; and

(d) the number of Computer Information Centres set up till date by Government in Maharashtra, location-wise, alongwith the funds allocated to each centre?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Internet Service Providers (ISPs) who request for permission to set up International Gateways for Internet using satellite medium are given in Principle Clearance by Department of Telecom. After getting this clearance ISPs are required to approach different Government agencies (Wireless Planning & Coordination) (WPC), Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) & (NOCC) to complete formalities. After receipt of clearance from these agencies, ISPs are given clearance for commissioning of International Gateways for Internet. The list of ISPs State-wise who have been proposed for commissioning clearance are given in the statement.

Further National Informatics Centre Network (NICNET) being a star network, the entire VSAT network traffic is routed through its Hub located at Delhi. The International gateways are located only at Delhi.

Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) has already set up 37 Centers all over the country.

(d) National Informatics Centre has set-up District Information Centres in all 35 districts of Maharashtra. The estimated asset value of computer and network infrastructure given to each district in the beginning and upgraded later is of the order of Rs. 15.00 lakhs per district.

Statement

Details of ISPs to whom clearance for Provisional Commissioning of ISP gateways has been given as on 14.02.2003

1.	Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation Ltd.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat
2.	ICENET.NET Ltd.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat
3.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat
4.	Wilnet Communication Ltd.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat
5.	Bharti BT Internet Ltd.	Bangalore	Karnataka
6.	Comsat Max Ltd.	Bangalore	Karnataka
7.	Estel Communication Pvt. Ltd.	Bangalore	Karnataka
8.	Primus Telecommunications India Ltd.	Bangalore	Karnataka
9.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Bangalore	Karnataka
10.	Siti Cable Network Limited	Bangalore	Karnataka
11.	GNFC	Bharauch	Gujarat
12.	Bharti BT Internet Ltd.	Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh
13.	Satyam Infoway ltd.	Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh
14.	SAB Infotech Ltd.	Chandigarh	Chandigarh
15.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Chandigarh	Chandigarh

209	<i>Written Answers</i>	PHALGUNA 14, 1924 (<i>Saka</i>)	<i>to Questions</i>	210
16.	Track Online Net India Pvt. Ltd.	Chennai	Tamil Nadu	
17.	Bharti BT Internet Ltd.	Chennai	Tamil Nadu	
18.	Comsat Max Ltd.	Chennai	Tamil Nadu	
19.	Data Access (India) Ltd.	Chennai	Tamil Nadu	
20.	Dishnet DSL Ltd.	Chennai	Tamil Nadu	
21.	Primus Telecommunications India Ltd.	Chennai	Tamil Nadu	
22.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Chennai	Tamil Nadu	
23.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Chennai	Tamil Nadu	
24.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Cochin	Kerala	
25.	Bharti BT Internet Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
26.	Data Access (India) Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
27.	Direct Internet Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
28.	Dishnet DSL Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
29.	Estel Communication Pvt. Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
30.	Primus Telecommunications India Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
31.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
32.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
33.	Trak Online Net India Pvt. Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
34.	World Phone Services Pvt. Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
35.	Wipronet Ltd.	Delhi	Delhi	
36.	Hughes Escorts Communication Ltd.	Gurgaon	Haryana	
37.	Appologic Broadband Systems Ltd.	Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	
38.	Astra Infonet Pvt. Ltd.	Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	
39.	Tata Internet Services Ltd.	Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	
40.	Comsat Max Ltd.	Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	
41.	Estel Communication Pvt. Ltd.	Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh	
42.	HCL Comnet Systems & Services Ltd.	Kharagpur	West Bengal	
43.	Bharti BT Internet Ltd.	Kolkata	West Bengal	
44.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Kolkata	West Bengal	
45.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh	
46.	BSES Telecom Ltd.	Mumbai	Maharashtra	
47.	Data Access (India) Ltd.	Mumbai	Maharashtra	
48.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Mumbai	Maharashtra	
49.	World Phone Services Pvt. Ltd.	Mumbai	Maharashtra	

50.	HCL Comnet Systems & Services Ltd.	Noida	Uttar Pradesh
51.	Phoenix Overseas Ltd.	Noida	Uttar Pradesh
52.	Bharti BT Internet Ltd.	Pune	Maharashtra
53.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Pune	Maharashtra
54.	Dishnet DSL Ltd.	Hyderabad	Andhra Pradesh
55.	Satyam Infoway Ltd.	Secunderabad	Andhra Pradesh

Opening of Homoeopathic Dispensaries/Hospitals

2142. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to open Homoeopathic dispensaries/hospitals in the country;

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

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) The opening of Homoeopathic dispensaries/hospitals is the responsibility of the State Governments/Union Territory Administrations and they take the decision keeping in view the felt needs of the people of the area and the availability of funds.

National Human Development Report

2143. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to initiate the development activities in the different States for uniform development in the country as identified in National Human Development Report 2001;

(b) whether the Government have examined the National Human Development Report 2002 which has since been submitted by Planning Commission;

(c) if so, the recommendations made by it; and

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (d) The National Human Development Report (NHDR) 2001 was prepared by the

Planning Commission and released in March, 2002. The human development index for each State was worked out based on health, education and economic indicators, which are widely recognized as the most important components of total human development. The Government, both in the Centre and in the States, have initiated a number of programmes to improve the health and educational status of the people, as also to provide opportunities for employment and enhanced incomes. These concerns have been given a place of prominence in the Tenth Five Year Plan. Monitorable targets covering social, economic and environmental dimensions of human development have been set for the Tenth and subsequent Plans.

State Health Development Project

2144. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Health Development Project funded by WHO and launched in 1996 in Karnataka has been wound up;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the quantum of funds spent out of the sanctioned sum for this project; and

(d) the achievements of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) The Karnataka State Health Systems Development Project has been assisted by the World Bank and not the WHO. This project had been started in July 1996 and was supposed to close in March 2002. However, the World Bank has agreed to extend this project up to March 2004. The World Bank Supervision Mission had reported in June 2002 that about 84 percent of the credit had been disbursed. It is expected that the remaining progress in this project with the revised cost of Rs. 595 crore would be made during the extended period. By June

2002, out of 204 hospitals taken up under the project, work in 178 hospitals had been completed. Besides, considerable progress has been achieved in other components of the project like increase in bed strength, procurement of equipment and drugs, disease surveillance, strengthening management and information systems, etc.

Training to Chess Talent

2145. DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received a proposal from the All India Chess Federation to engage eminent coaches to train country's talents in chess;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Proposal for inviting a few foreign coaches from All India Chess Federation (AICF) has been received and discussed in the Foreign Coaches Selection Committee held on the 5th February, 2003. The Committee has recommended engagement of some such coaches on short-term basis.

[*Translation*]

List Handed Over by U.S. Administration to India

2146. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:
SHRI C.N. SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the U.S. Administration has recently handed over a list containing 170 names of illegal persons resembling Indian names to the Government of India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes.

(b) As on date, the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the United States has given to the Indian Embassy in Washington 171 names of persons purported to be of Indian origin and staying illegally in the United States.

(c) Indian citizenship of 75 of the above persons has been confirmed and they have been issued emergency travel documents to return to India. The national status of the remaining 96 persons is being verified from the concerned authorities in India.

Fake Institutions

2147. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that some fake institutions providing medical degrees in exchange of huge amount of money have mushroomed in the country as reported in the 'Rashtriya Sahara' dated December 7, 2002;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to nab the operators of such institutions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

[*English*]

First Postal Stamp

2148. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the first postage stamp of the world—a copper ticket—was released on March 31, 1774 from Patna during the tenure of East India Company;

(b) whether one of the said ticket/stamp is now in the British Museum in London and the other is in the possession of the resident of Jabalpur; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to bring the said ticket/stamp back to India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) A copper ticket is known to have been introduced in Calcutta Post Office in January 1774. It was not the first postage stamp of the world. It was a copper token which was used for transmission of mail within the territories of the East India Company. The first postage stamp of the world was Penny Black issued in Great Britain in 1840.

(b) In view of (a) above, the details regarding availability of the said copper ticket/stamp which is in the British Museum and the other in the private possession of a person in Jabalpur is not known to the Department of Post.

(c) The Ministry of Communications & IT, Department of Post is not empowered to deal with Indian artifacts retained in Museums abroad.

Family Welfare/Rural Health Schemes

2149. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals regarding Family Welfare and Rural Health schemes received by the Union Government from the State Governments during the last three years, till date, State-wise and year-wise;

- (b) the latest position of the pending proposals;
- (c) whether some of these proposals are for foreign assistance;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) by when these pending proposals are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) A number of proposals for providing Family Welfare and Primary Health Care Services were received from various States. While the projects for urban health programme are funded by this Ministry, the other area projects are supported by foreign agencies like UNFPA, DFID (UK), DANIDA (Denmark), Government of Germany etc. Statement-I showing the project proposals received from various States under the urban health programme and other Area Projects along with their details and present status is enclosed.

Besides, 24 States of the country are supported under European Commission assisted Sector Investment Programme (SIP). The outlays have been earmarked for each State and the proposals received from the States are scrutinized and funds are released therefrom. Details of funds released under this programme during the last three years are given at Statement-II. The details of the proposals received from States for foreign assistance are given at Statement-III.

Statement I

Family Welfare/Rural Health Schemes

The following proposals were received from States to provide Primary Health Care Services in their urban areas with focus on urban slums and vulnerable groups

Sl. No.	State	City	Total cost (Rs. in Lakhs)	Period/date of receipt	Present Status
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	M.P.	Jabalpur	379	3 years/8.10.02	Project approved, released Rs. 50.00 lakhs as first instalment.
		Bhopal	551	3 years/8.10.02	Project approved, released Rs. 50.00 lakhs as first instalment.
		Indore	422	3 years/8.10.02	Project approved, released Rs. 50.00 lakhs as first instalment.

1	2	3	4	5	6
2.	Delhi	Delhi	437.24	5 years/8.3.02	MCD, Delhi requested to call for technical and financial proposals on the basis to TORs for hiring an agency to develop a project design for strengthening of primary health care services for urban slums and health vulnerable population of Delhi.
3.	Tamil Nadu	Ambattin	330.95	5 years/1.8.02	Project proposal in respect of these 7 cities sent back to state for revision.
		Avadi	38.06	5 years/1.8.02	Project proposal in respect of these 7 cities sent back to state for revision.
		Virundnagar	99.51	5 years/1.8.02	Project proposal in respect of these 7 cities sent back to state for revision.
		Madhavanam	73.17	5 years/14.8.02	Project proposal in respect of these 7 cities sent back to state for revision.
		Chidambaram	55.84	5 years/14.8.02	Project proposal in respect of these 7 cities sent back to state for revision.
		Virudhachalam	59.25	5 years/14.8.02	Project proposal in respect of these 7 cities sent back to state for revision.
		Nilgris	62.13	5 years/14.8.02	Project proposal in respect of these 7 cities sent back to state for revision.
		Thiruchagode	174.04	5 years/16.4.02	Revised proposals received from the State in respect of these 3 cities sent to European Commission for their comments.
		Dharmapuri	117.69	5 years/16.4.02	Revised proposals received from the State in respect of these 3 cities sent to European Commission for their comments.
		Kumarapalayam	133.41	5 years/16.4.02	Revised proposals received from the State in respect of these 3 cities sent to European Commission for their comments.
4.	Kerala	Cochin	1945	4 years/24.10.02	Project proposals sent back to State for revision as per comments of the Ministry and European Commission. Revised proposal awaited.
		Thiruvananthapuram	1831	4 years/24.10.02	Project proposals sent back to State for revision as per comments of the Ministry and European Commission. Revised proposal awaited..
5.	Andhra Pradesh	Vijayawada	537.05	5 years/18.10.02	Project sent to European Commission for comments.
		Visakhapatnam	532.5	5 years/18.10.02	Project sent to European Commission for comments.
6.	Tripura	Tripura	1374	5 years/4.3.02	Project proposal sent to State for revision. Revised proposal awaited.

1	2	3	4	5	6
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu Siums	207.89	5 years/12.12.02	Project sent to European Commission for comments.
8.	Gujarat	Surat	593	4 years/23.10.02	Project sent to European Commission for comments.
		Ahmedabad			Project sent to European Commission for comments.
9.	Uttar Pradesh	Lucknow	260	1 year roll over plan	Project under implementation in Lucknow city.
10.	Mizoram				Proposal sent back to the State Government for revision. Revised proposal awaited.
11.	Haryana	Faridabad Gurgaon Sonapat Panipat Hissar Rohtak Rewari Panchkula	1197	5 years/31.1.03	Under consideration.

In addition, the following area project proposals for strengthening of Health Infrastructure and for providing family welfare services to be funded with foreign assistance were also received.

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	State	Total cost (Rs. in crores)	Period/Date of receipt	Present Status
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	UNFPA assisted Integrated Population & Development Project	Rajasthan	51.03	5 years/30.10.02	Under consideration. EFC meeting scheduled on 4.3.03.
2.	UNFPA assisted Integrated Population & Development Project	Orissa	40.1	5 years/5.2.03	-do-
3.	UNFPA assisted Integrated Population & Development Project	Madhya Pradesh	49.82	5 years/5.2.03	-do-

1	2	3	4	5	6
4.	UNFPA assisted Integrated Population & Development Project	Gujarat	36.45	5 years/24.12.02	-do-
5.	UNFPA assisted Integrated Population & Development Project	Maharashtra	48.6	5 years/30.12.02	-do-
6.	UNFPA assisted Integrated Population & Development Project	Kerala	4.86	5 years/29.1.03	-do-
7.	DFID (UK assisted Interim Health Reform Project)	Orissa	8.08	2 years/13.5.02	Approved and under implementation w.e.f. 01.07.02.
8.	DANIDA (Denmark) assisted Tamil Nadu Area Health Care Project Phase-IV	Tamil Nadu	565.46	5 years/6.5.02	Project proposal dropped due to lack of response from DANIDA.
9.	Surya Uday	Arunachal Pradesh	13.69 crores	5 years/16.4.02	No donor agency was willing to support the project. State Govt. was requested to consider the project under European Commission supported State Investment Programme
10.	German (GTZ) assisted Himachal Pradesh Basic Health Project Phase-II	Himachal Pradesh	2.6 Million Euro	3 years/16.5.02	Project approved in principle. State Government requested to submit revised proposal.
11.	German (GTZ) assisted Maharashtra Basic Health Programme Phase-II	Maharashtra	2.5 Million Euro	3 years/3.1.03	Project approved in principle. State Government is being requested to send the additional information in the suggested template.

Statement II*EC supported H&FW programme (SIG) year-wise details of releases*

(Rs. in Lakhs)

Name of the SIP State	Funds released				Total
	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03*	
1. Andhra Pradesh	1.00	50.00	205.00	100.00	356.00
2. Assam	21.10	35.00	228.00	0.00	284.10
3. Gujarat	21.38	100.00	6218.00	0.00	6,339.38
4. Himachal Pradesh	36.00	206.37	18.00	100.00	360.37
5. Haryana	21.64	245.00	212.00	0.00	478.64
6. Kerala	21.00	105.00	140.00	185.00	451.00
7. Madhya Pradesh	21.00	145.00	331.00	200.00	697.00
8. Maharashtra	21.52	0.00	290.00	110.00	421.52
9. Orissa	1.60	20.00	332.00	98.90	452.50
10. Rajasthan	1.00	140.00	1596.82	0.00	1,737.82
11. Uttar Pradesh	21.82	182.00	1188.00	350.00	1,741.82
12. Bihar	0.00	0.00	7.00	0.00	7.00
13. Jharkhand	0.00	0.00	86.00	0.00	86.00
14. Chhattisgarh	0.00	0.00	212.00	0.00	212.00
15. Uttaranchal	0.00	0.00	92.00	0.00	92.00
16. Manipur	0.00	5.00	70.00	0.00	75.00
17. Sikkim	0.00	0.00	17.00	50.00	67.00
18. Tripura	0.00	0.00	5.00	0.00	5.00
19. Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00	42.86	0.00	42.86
20. Nagaland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
21. Meghalaya	0.00	0.00	43.00	0.00	43.00
22. Mizoram	0.00	45.00	12.00	30.00	87.00
23. West Bengal	0.00	0.00	238.00	0.00	238.00
24. Jammu & Kashmir	0.00	0.00	20.00	0.00	20.00
Total	189.07	1278.37	11603.68	1223.90	14,295.02

(figures provisional)

*Till date

Statement III

Sl. No.	Name of the Project	State	Total Cost (Rs. in crores)	Period	Present Status
1.	Improvement in Primary Health with German assistance	Chhattisgarh	297.24	5 years	Forwarded to DEA for further processing
2.	Improving Health Sector and Service Delivery with German assistance	Uttaranchal	64.32	2 years	-do-
3.	Decentralization of Health Management and Strengthening Community Health Action with German assistance	Madhya Pradesh	136.32	2 years	-do-
4.	Strengthening of Primary Health Care Infrastructure with World Bank assistance	West Bengal	1027.42	5 years	-do-

Discussion on Population Growth*[Translation]*

2150. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY:
SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission on Population held a discussion recently with NGOs and self help groups to strengthen its strategy to check population growth in the country; and

(b) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) The National Commission on Population organized a Conference of NGOs, on 27.12.2002 in New Delhi to have an interaction with such organizations for their possible involvement in population stabilization activities. A large number of organizations attended the Conference and submitted projects for undertaking activities relevant for population stabilization. These are being examined with a view to give assistance to those projects which are duly approved.

Expansion of Services of Shipping Corporation of India

2151. SHRI RAMSHAKAL: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) proposes to expand the network of its Services;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the services being provided at present by the Corporation have not been found upto the mark; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Corporation to improve the quality of its services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Expansion of Network of services is a continuous process in SCI based on commercial principles.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

World Bank Assistance for Hospitals

2152. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA:
SHRI RAJO SINGH:
SHRIMATI REENA CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals received by the Union Government from various State Governments seeking World Bank assistance for improving the condition of

medium level hospitals/dispensaries in respective States during the last three years till date;

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

(c) the present status of the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) The details of the State Health System Development Projects launched with the World Bank assistance in the last three years are as follows:

State	Project Period	Project Outlay (Rs. in crores)	Status
Maharashtra	w.e.f. 14.2.99 for 5½ years	727.00	Under Implementation
Uttar Pradesh	w.e.f. 1.7.2000 for 5½ years	521.00	-do-

The details of other proposals received in the last three years and processed; for World Bank assistance are as under:—

Assam

The Project proposal of Assam with an estimate of Rs. 382 crores was submitted to World Bank on 29.1.2002.

Rajasthan

Rajasthan State Health System Development Project with an estimate of Rs. 419 crores was posed to World Bank on 13.3.2001. The World Bank Mission in its review has advised the State Government to revise the project proposal.

Tamil Nadu

Tamil Nadu Health System Development Project with an estimate of Rs. 650 crores was submitted to World Bank on 14.3.2001.

Madhya Pradesh

The proposal of Madhya Pradesh with an estimate of Rs. 629.62 crore has been examined in consultation with Planning Commission. The Government of M.P. has been requested to send additional copies of the complete proposal for processing it further for World Bank assistance.

Kerala

The proposal of the Kerala with an estimate of Rs. 810.47 crore is being examined for World Bank assistance.

J&K

The proposal received from the State Government in 2000 was examined in consultation with Planning Commission and returned to the State Government on 2.11.2000 to modify the proposal as per the remarks of the Planning Commission.

Chhattisgarh

The Government of Chhattisgarh has expressed willingness to take up the World Bank assistance for State Health System Development Project. State Government has been advised to submit a detailed project report.

[English]

Atomic Power Generation in Rajasthan

2153. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the share of atomic energy in total power generation in Rajasthan;

(b) whether the share of atomic power in the State is likely to be increased;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor:

(e) whether the Government are negotiating with private companies with a view to seek their participation in atomic power generation; and

(f) if so, the details in regard to the manner in which the Government propose to have control over the private companies keeping in view the importance of the atomic fuel?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (d) At present, there are four nuclear reactors, Rajasthan Atomic Power Stations 1 to 4, located in Rajasthan, with a total nuclear power capacity of 740 MWe. This corresponds to 24% of the installed capacity in Rajasthan in the State Sector. Rajasthan Atomic Power Station supplies about 14% of the total power capacity available in Rajasthan from State and Central Sectors. Two nuclear power reactor units of capacity of 220 MWe each [Rajasthan Atomic Power Project (RAPP-5&6)] are under construction at Rawatbhata in Rajasthan. These units are scheduled to commence commercial operations by August 2007 and February 2008 respectively. Work on this project is progressing as per schedule. On completion of these projects, the total nuclear power capacity in Rajasthan will increase to 1180 MWe.

(e) and (f) While the Government is open to specific offers for participation by private firms, in the nuclear power sector, no concrete proposals from the private sector have been received so far. Such offers, when received would have to be considered on the basis of technical suitability, economic attractiveness, regulatory requirements of our country and the conditions attached to the offers. As per present policy atomic fuel is owned and controlled by the Government. Also at present the Atomic Energy Act (1962) does not permit private participation in the nuclear power sector.

[*Translation*]

Pathological Investigations/Test by Private Sector

2154. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to hand over all the services pertaining to pathological investigations

and tests of the Government hospitals to the Private Sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[*English*]

Capacity in Telecom Factory, Richhai

2155. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the capacity of Galvanizing Plant at Telecom Factory, Richhai is under-utilized ranging from 34 to 41 per cent;

(b) if so, the details of shortfall in production during the last five years alongwith the reasons therefor; and

(c) the fresh steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The capacity of galvanizing plant at Telecom Factory Richhai is partly under utilized. The percentage utilization during last 5 years ranged between 59% to 83% (in terms of weight of the material galvanized) and not 34% to 41%.

(b) Installed capacity of the plant is 26000 M.Ts. The details of shortfall in production along with the reasons therefor are as under:—

Year	Production achievement	Shortfall	
		Quantity	Percentage
1997-1998	15,664	10356	40%
1998-1999	15,276	10724	41%
1999-2000	17,148	8852	34%
2000-2001	16,143	9857	38%
2001-2002	21,549	4451	17%

The weight of the material galvanized is dependent upon the actual product mix which in turn is based upon the demand, hence the shortfall in terms of tonnage.

(c) Towers and tubes fabricated at Jabalpur and Bhilai Factories are also being galvanized at TF Richhai so as to achieve optimum utilization of galvanizing plant.

[Translation]

Foreign Investors in Road Sector

2156. SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA:
SHRI MANSINH PATEL:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether proposals had been received from the foreign investors for constructing roads in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof for the period from January 1, 1996 to March 31, 2003; country-wise; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) to (c) This Ministry is responsible for National Highways only. The details of National Highway Projects being executed by National Highways Authority of India with foreign investment on Build, Operate and Transfer (Annuity) basis are given in the enclosed statement. Besides these, two proposals from Government of Malaysia have been received for development of one section each on National Highway-1 and National Highway-45 and 45-B. The proposals are at initial stage.

Statement

Foreign Investment of BOT (Toll)/BOT (Annuity)

Sl. No.	Name of Projects	NH No.	Length (in Km)	Total Project Cost	Name of the firm and Nationality
Annuity Based Projects					
1.	Panagarh-Palsit (km 517 to km 581)	2	64.457	350	Gamuda Malaysia-WCT Malaysia (Malaysian)
2.	Palsit-Dankuni (km 581 to km 646)	2	65	432.4	Consortium of Gokuda (Malaysia) & WCT Engineering (Malaysia) (Malaysian)
3.	Ankapalli-Tuni (km 2.8 to km 49)	5	58.947	283.2	GMR-Tuni-Ankapalli Express Ltd. (Indian-Malaysian)
4.	Tambaram-Tindivanam (km 28 to km 121)	45	93	375	Tambaram-Tindivanam Expressway Pvt. Ltd. (Consortium & UE Malaysia) (Indian-Malaysian JV)
Toll Based Projects					
5.	Vivekananda Bridge and Approach	2	6	600	SVBTG Consortium of AIDC group (USA), STRADC (Philippines) (Philippines-USA)
6.	Nellore-Tada (km 163.6 to km 52.8)	5	110.52	621.35	CIDB Malaysia (Malaysian)
7.	Nandigama-Vijayawada	9	35	138.65	CIDB Malaysia (Malaysian)

*[English]***Long Term Plan for Inland Water Transport**

2157. SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have framed any long term plan to develop Inland Water Transport;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether a separate task force is proposed to be set up in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI):

(a) and (b) Yes, Sir. In order to develop the sector the Government have taken certain policy measures and drawn up an Inland Water Transport Policy. The main features of the policy are-

(i) Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has been authorized to raise money from market by way of bonds.

(ii) Joint Venture by IWAI to encourage private investment.

(iii) Equity participation by Government in BOT projects.

(iv) Income Tax exemption similar to National Highways.

(v) Introduction of Inland Vessel Building Subsidy Scheme of 30% to encourage fleet expansion.

(vi) Enhancement of depreciation rate for inland vessels fixed at par with sea-going vessels.

(vii) Customs duty concessions for equipment and Machinery related to IWT development.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Indian Red Cross Society

2158. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the role of the Union Government with regard to the management and functioning of the Red Cross Society in India;

(b) the number of new branches of the society opened during each of the last three years;

(c) whether any Central assistance is given to Red Cross Society; and

(d) if so, the details of the assistance provided during the last two years and the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) has been established as an autonomous body under the Indian Red Cross Society Act XV of 1920 (As amended by Act. No. 22 of 1956 and the Adaptation of Laws (No. 4) Order 1957 and Act 14 of 1992). The role of the Central Government in the management and functioning of IRCS has been defined under the provisions of the said Act and the Rules made thereunder. The Managing Body of IRCS consists of eighteen members including six members nominated by the President of India in his capacity as the President of IRCS and a Chairman. The present Secretary of Department of Health in the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare is one of the six nominated members of IRCS. The present Minister of Health and Family Welfare is the Chairperson of IRCS. The Managing Body of IRCS is the supreme body which takes all the decisions, including policy decisions, for the governance of the Indian Red Cross Society.

(b) The number of State branches of IRCS opened during each of the last three years is as under.

2001	Nil
2002	Two
2003	One

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The details of the assistance provided during the last two years and current year are as under:

Year	Source/amount in Rupees			Total
	Ministry of Health & Family Welfare	Ministry of Defence (KSB)	Prime Minister's National Relief Fund	
2000-2001	21,50,000	16,55,000	—	38,05,000
2001-2002	23,00,000	13,45,000	—	36,45,000
2002-2003	—	—	2,00,00,000	2,00,00,000

[Translation]

Opening of Post Offices/Telephone Exchanges in Bihar

2159. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state the names of places in Bihar where the post offices/Sub-post offices/Telephone exchanges are likely to be opened during the year 2003-2004, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): New Post Offices are opened under Plan scheme subject to fulfillment of prescribed norms and availability of requisite resources. Since the Circle-wise targets are finalized only at the commencement of each Plan year, the details of places where the Post Offices/Sub Post Offices are to be opened in 2003-2004 are yet to be finalized.

Opening of telephone exchanges is also subject to finalization of Net Switching Capacity target for Bihar Circle for 2003-2004 and availability of resources. However, tentative location-wise names of places in Bihar where the telephone exchanges are likely to be opened during the year 2003-2004 are given in the enclosed statement.

Statement

Tentative Location-wise Name of Places in Bihar where the Telephone Exchange is likely to be opened during 2003-2004

Sl.No.	Name of District	Name of Places
1	2	3
1.	Jehanabad	Jehanabad Court
2.	Aurangabad	Jaisa More
3.	Munger	Safiabad
4.	Saharsa	i. Saharsa M/W Campus ii. Naya Bazar iii. Hokpara
5.	W. Champaran	i. Garhara Kothi ii. Meghwal Mothia

1	2	3
6.	Bhagalpur	Rangra
7.	Muzaffarpur	i. Ahiyapur ii. Chandani Chowk
8.	Patna	i. Phulwarisharif ii. Ranjan Path iii. Sipara

[English]

Second Phase of NHDP Scheme

2160. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to offer a number of sections for execution under the annuity/build operate transfer basis in the second phase of the National Highway Development Project Scheme;

(b) if so, the number of such sections proposed to be offered under the scheme;

(c) the number of road projects under execution on BOT basis;

(d) whether the work on the projects is progressing as per the schedule fixed for the purpose; and

(e) if not, the reasons for delay in the implementation of the projects under the Golden Quadrilateral Scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. It is too early to indicate the number of sections of National Highways to be offered for execution under the annuity/build-operate-transfer basis in the second phase of National Highway Development Project. It would depend upon the detailed engineering and financial analysis for the particular section.

(c) The list of the projects under execution on BOT (toll based) and BOT (annuity basis) is at the enclosed statement.

(d) Yes, Sir. No major delay is anticipated in the completion of the BOT projects.

(e) Does not arise.

Statement**Second Phase of NHDP Scheme**

Sl. No.	Name of the Contract	Corridor	NH No.	Length (in km)
Annuity Based Projects				
1.	Panagarh-Palsit (km 517 to km 581)	GQ	2	64.457
2.	Palsit-Dankuni (km 581 to km 646) (Durgapur Expressway)	GQ	2	65
3.	Ankapalli-Tuni (km 359 to km 300)	GQ	5	59
4.	Tuni-Dharmavaram (km 300 to km 253)	GQ	5	47
5.	Dharmavaram-Rajjahmundry (km 253 to km 200)	GQ	5	53
6.	Nellore Bypass (km 178.2 km 161)	GQ	5	17.2
7.	Maharashtra Border-Belgaum (km 592 to km 515)	GQ	4	77
8.	Tambaram-Tindivanam (km 28 to km 121)	Others	45	93
Toll Based Projects				
1.	Vivekananda Bridge and Approach	GQ	2	6
2.	Mahapura (near Jaipur) to Kishangarh (km 273.5 to km 363.885)	GQ	8	90.38
3.	Nellore Tada (km 163.6 to km 52.8)	GQ	5	111
4.	Satara-Kagal (km 725 to km 592)	GQ	4	133
5.	Tumkur-Neelmangala (km 62 to km 29.5)	GQ	4	32.5
6.	Delhi-Gurgaon Section (Access Controlled 6/8-lane) (km. 14.3 to Km. 42)	GQ	8	27.7
7.	Nandigama-Vijayawada	Others	9	35

Eradication of Leprosy

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

2161. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:
SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

(e) the present target of the Union Government to eliminate leprosy?

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. In fact there has been a declining trend in so far as number of leprosy patients are concerned.

(a) whether the cases of leprosy have been increasing in the country;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) and (d) The WHO has supplied Anti leprosy drugs, free of cost to meet the requirements of the entire country. The value of drugs supplied during the last 3 years is given below:

(c) whether the WHO and other US organizations have extended financial and other help to India to fight the disease;

	(Rs. in crores)
2000-01	20.00
2001-02	11.74
2002-03	10.00

These drugs are supplied free of cost to all the States/UTs as per their requirement.

(e) The present target of the Central Government is to achieve elimination of leprosy at the National level, .e. one leprosy patient per 10,000 population, by the year 2004-05.

Harms Caused by Mega Project

2162. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that Society for Andaman and Nicobar Ecology (SANE) has alleged that the Andaman Trunk Road, a Mega project meant to unite islands, has harmed Jarawas Tribes medically and socially;

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

(c) the remedial steps taken/proposed to be taken by his Ministry to save tribals from such harms?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Permission for New Drugs

2163. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE:
DR. BALIRAM:
SHRI SAIDUZZAMA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Authority for granting permission to new drugs lies only with the Drugs Controller General (India) and the State Drug Controllers;

(b) if so, whether many State Drug Controllers have been granting permission for new drugs in violation of the Drugs and Cosmetic Act and Rules;

(c) if so, the details of such violations by State Drug Controllers including the names of the companies and products; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken against the erring authorities and companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) The authority for granting permission for new drugs lies only with the Drugs Controller General (India).

(b) to (d) Some instances of issuing licences by State Licensing Authority for drugs which fall within the ambit of definition of new drug (Rule 122-E) have been noticed. Government has issued strict direction to all State Licensing Authorities to be careful in this regard.

Drugs & Cosmetics Rules 69, 71 and 75, which pertain to approval of drugs by State Licensing Authorities have also been amended vide Gazette Notification GSR 311 (E) dated 1st May, 2002 requiring that products falling within the purview of new drugs shall be accompanied with approval, in-writing, in favour of the applicant, from the office of DCG(I).

Popularisation of Unani and Ayurvedic System of Medicines

2164. SHRI C.N. SINGH:
SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made by the Government to popularize the Unani and Ayurvedic System of Medicines in the country;

(b) the achievements made in popularizing the same so far;

(c) the number of Unani and Ayurvedic Hospitals/ dispensaries in the country at present, location-wise and State-wise;

(d) whether any State Government has requested the Union Government for the establishment of Unani and Ayurvedic Hospitals and dispensaries;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the decision taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a)

The Government have popularised the Unani and Ayurvedic systems of medicines through print and audio visual media, distribution of publicity material, holding exhibitions and conferences and participation in health meals.

(b) Awareness and sensitisation have been achieved due to these measures.

(c) Two statements are enclosed giving state-wise number of hospitals and dispensaries under Ayurveda and Unani statement-I and Location-wise number of hospitals and dispensaries under CGHS (Statement-II).

(d) to (f) Health is a State subject and State Governments establish hospitals and dispensaries keeping in view the felt need and their financial resources.

Statement I

State-wise number of Hospitals and Dispensaries under Ayurveda and Unani in the Country

S.No.	States/UTs	Ayurveda		Unani	
		Hospitals	Dispensaries	Hospitals	Dispensaries
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	8	1437	6	195
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1	2	—	—
3.	Assam	1	329	—	1
4.	Bihar	11	522	5	128
5.	Delhi	5	132	2	18
6.	Goa	3	59	—	—
7.	Gujarat	48	821	—	—
8.	Haryana	7	424	1	20
9.	Himachal Pradesh	22	1112	—	3
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	2	240	2	178
11.	Jharkhand	1	INR	INR	INR
12.	Karnataka	118	590	13	51
13.	Kerala	110	713	—	1
14.	Madhya Pradesh	36	2086	2	56
15.	Maharashtra	78	463	8	23
16.	Orissa	8	524	—	9
17.	Punjab	14	481	—	26
18.	Rajasthan	80	3486	5	79
19.	Tamil Nadu	5	11	1	6
20.	Tripura	1	30	—	—
21.	Uttar Pradesh	2047	650	252	148
22.	Uttaranchal	322	70	2	—

1	2	3	4	5	6
23.	West Bengal	3	285	1	—
24.	Chandigarh	1	6	—	—
25.	D & N Haveli	—	4	—	—
26.	Daman & Diu	—	1	—	—
27.	Lakshadweep	—	2	—	—
28.	Pondicherry	—	11	—	—
Sub-Total (States/UTs)		2932	14491	300	942

Statement II

Location-wise number of Hospitals and Dispensaries under C.G.H.S.

S.No.	Cities	Dispensaries	
		Ayurveda	Unani
1.	Hyderabad	3	3
2.	Patna	1	—
3.	Delhi*	13	4
4.	Ahmedabad	1	—
5.	Mumbai	2	—
6.	Nagpur	2	—
7.	Pune	1	—
8.	Bangalore	2	1
9.	Jaipur	1	—
10.	Chennai	1	—
11.	Lucknow	1	1
12.	Allahabad	1	—
13.	Kanpur	1	—
14.	Meerut	1	—
15.	Calcutta	1	1
Total		32	10

*There is only one Hospital under Ayurveda located in Delhi.

Bifurcation of BSNL

2165. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to bifurcate BSNL to create a separate organisation for its cellular operations;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by BSNL to meet the competition from private cellular operators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

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

(c) The steps taken by BSNL are:

- (i) Offering of various competitive tariff plans for facilitating affordability of BSNL's cellular services.
- (ii) Establishment of distribution channels in addition to BSNL's own Customer Service Centres for easy accessibility to services for the consumers.
- (iii) Nationwide coverage including important National Highways & Railway routes of the country.
- (iv) Offering of nationwide roaming facility to post paid and zonal roaming to prepaid category customers.
- (v) Establishment of Call Centres to address Consumer grievances regarding mobile services.
- (vi) Continuous monitoring of the network performance for providing good quality services and thereby customer satisfaction.

*[Translation]***Functioning of Medical Colleges**

2166. SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH:
SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any complaints in regard to functioning and procedures of the medical colleges;

(b) if so, the number and nature of complaints received during the last three years and the outcome of the action taken by the Government on the said complaints;

(c) whether the Government propose to review the functioning of these medical colleges;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) In the normal course, the Ministry receive number of complaints on miscellaneous matters viz., administrative, corruption and ragging etc. There is no Centralized data on the number of the complaints as these are forwarded to the concerned State Govts for needful action. The State Govts are also required to undertake the periodic review of the functioning of the Medical Colleges as the medical colleges are under their control.

The Medical Council of India also receives complaints regarding lack of infrastructural facilities, standard of Medical Education etc., in the Medical Colleges, which are enquired into by the Council. Wherever necessary, the colleges are advised to rectify the deficiencies pointed out by the Council's Inspectors.

*[English]***Preparations for Next Olympics**

2167. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made plans to enable India to perform better at the next Olympics;

(b) if so, the facilities and strategy evolved therefor;

(c) the funds to be spent thereon;

(d) whether any result oriented programmes have been chalked-out; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA): (a) to (e) The preparations for the next Olympic Games form part of the on-going process of training of sportspersons for participation in international events. Discipline-wise, Long Term Development Plans are in the process of discussion and finalization in consultation with National Sports Federations. The probable are being provided specialized coaching at different centres under the Indian and foreign coaches/experts with required sports equipment and scientific inputs. Government-Private sector cooperation in selecting and sponsoring promising sportspersons is another activity being undertaken to improve training, equipment for medal prospects. No funds have been specifically allocated for next Olympic Games.

Golden Quadrilateral Projects in Tamil Nadu

2168. SHRI V. VETRISELVAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of work of projects completed so far under the Golden Quadrilateral Project in Tamil Nadu;

(b) whether the Government have reviewed the progress of the said projects;

(c) if so, the reasons if any for slow progress; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to complete the projects within the stipulated time period?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) A statement is enclosed.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Progress on a few contracts has been affected mainly due to following reasons:

(i) Delay in land acquisition.

(ii) Relocation of utilities such as electric poles, water supply pipelines, etc.

(iii) Removal of structures (houses/residential/commercial buildings, religious structures in built up area.

(iv) Problem in lifting adequate quantity of earth.

(d) Government of Tamil Nadu has been requested to expedite the proceedings of land acquisition, utility

shifting, removal of obstructions and to allow the Contractor to lift adequate quantity of earth.

Statement

Percentage of work of projects completed under Golden Quadrilateral in the State of Tamil Nadu as on 31.1.2003

Sl. No.	Stretch	NH	Length (in km)	Percentage of physical progress achieved
1.	Hathipali-Hosur (km 33 to km 48.6)	7	16.00	Completed
2.	Tada-Chennai (km 52.8 to km 11)	5	41.80	24.52
3.	Hosur-Krishnagiri (km 48.6 to km 94.0) Common with North-South Corridor	7	45.40	33.39
4.	Krishnagiri-Vaniyambadi (km 0.0 to km. 49.0)	46	49.00	14.7
5.	Vaniyambadi-Pallikonda (km 49.0 to 100.0)	46	51.00	9.7
6.	Pallikonda-Ranipet and Walahjapet bypass (km 100.0 to km 145.0)	46	45.00	15.05
7.	Walahjapet-Kanchipuram (km 106.4 to km 70.2)	4	36.20	25.01
8.	Kanchipuram-Poonamalee (km 70.2 to km 13.8)	4	56.40	5.3

Prime Minister's Visit to China

2169. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether China has extended an invitation to our Prime Minister to visit that country;

(b) if so, by when this visit is likely to materialise; and

(c) the details of the issues likely to be discussed with China?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) Yes.

(b) and (c) Dates and agenda for the visit will be worked out through diplomatic channels.

Maritime Institute at Chennai

2170. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up Maritime Institute at Chennai in view of the facilities available for maritime research; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Vacant Posts of SCs/STs

2171. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether some posts of SCs/STs under various categories are vacant in various departments and undertakings under his Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether various categories of the employees working in these departments and undertakings under his Ministry have been promoted and fresh recruitment made during the last three years;

(d) if so, the year-wise and category-wise details of fresh recruitment made under various categories during this period and in the current year till date;

(e) whether the prescribed rules have been followed with regard to the recruitment and promotion of persons belonging to SCs/STs categories; and

(f) if not, the remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (f) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Opening of Dental units in RML Hospital

2172. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether patients are facing a lot of inconvenience in Dental Department of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital as two days are fixed for dental operations and OPD is closed for those days;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to open two more units of Dental Department like other departments to provide medical facility for six days a week to dental patients;

(c) if so, by when the other units are likely to be started; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (d) The OPD of Dental Department of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital runs 4 days in a week *i.e.* Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Wednesdays and Saturdays are fixed for operation of the patients examined on the above mentioned OPD days. However, the patients, who report in the OPD on the operation days, are not refused treatment/consultation. Besides, emergency services are rendered round the clock.

[English]

Retired Sports Persons

2173. SHRI SHASHI KUMAR:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of sports persons identified by the Government who played for India in national and international events and are presently living in very pathetic condition, State-wise;

(b) the action taken by the Government for their welfare; and

(c) the number of persons rehabilitated so far, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports runs the Scheme: National Welfare Fund for Sportspersons whereunder, a pension up to Rs. 2500/- p.m., and lump sum financial assistance of up to Rs. 40,000/- can be sanctioned to the outstanding national and international players, placed in indigent circumstances, *i.e.* whose monthly income, from all sources, is less than Rs. 3,000/-. The State-wise number of sportspersons, presently receiving pensions, under the scheme, is as given below:

Names of State	No. of Sportspersons in receipt of Welfare Pension
Andhra Pradesh	6
Delhi	1
Gujarat	1
Karnataka	10
Kerala	13
Madhya Pradesh	1
Maharashtra	3
Orissa	6
Punjab	1
Tamil Nadu	2
Uttar Pradesh	1
West Bengal	3
Total	48

(c) There is no Government scheme for rehabilitation of sportspersons.

Thorium Reserve in Country

2174. SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the supply of thorium for development of thorium based reactor is sufficient in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, whether the Government propose to import thorium; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India has vast Thorium reserves (almost one third of the entire world's Thorium reserves) equivalent to 5,18,000 tonnes of Thorium metal mainly in the beach sands of Kerala.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Pending Proposal

2175. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal regarding Central Road Fund and National Highways Scheme in the Jodhpur district of Rajasthan is pending with the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the State Government has also sent any other proposal under the CRF head; and

(d) if so, the time by which it is likely to be approved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. 6 Nos. of Central Road Fund proposals amounting to Rs. 6.52 crores and 1 No. of proposal amounting to Rs. 3.70 crores under National Highways scheme in the Jodhpur district of Rajasthan are pending in the Ministry.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. At present 34 nos. of other Central Road Fund proposals amounting to Rs. 48.26

crores are under scrutiny in the Ministry. The approval of CRF proposals is subject to the limit of two times the initial annual accrual of Rs. 75.82 crores, which is Rs. 151.64 crores. These are expected to be cleared shortly.

[English]

IT Export Target

2176. SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH:
SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI:
SHRI A. NARENDRA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council has expressed views that India's export of IT including computer software and allied spares are growing at the high rate of 32.05% to achieve the export target of \$50 billion by 2008;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the target fixed for the next three years;

(c) whether the Council has urged the Government to have consistent policies to achieve the target; and

(d) if so, the efforts being made by the Government to achieve the goal of IT export by 2008?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir. As per Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC), the growth in export of IT software and services during the year 2001-2002 was 32.75%.

(b) As per ESC, the export made during the last five years and the growth rate achieved is enclosed at statement-I. The target for the next 3 years as per the Tenth Five Year Plan are enclosed at statement-II.

(c) and (d) Based on the feedback from the members, the Council has been interacting regularly with the Government on matters related to policy and procedures, which would help the Industry to achieve the export target fixed. The steps taken by the Government to achieve the goal of IT export by 2008 are given at Statement-III.

Statement I**Growth in Exports of Computer Software & Related Services 1996-1997 to 2001-2002**

Year	Exports (Rs. Crores)*	Growth Rate (%)	Average Annual % age Growth
1996-97	4113	55.21	—
1997-98	6800	65.33	—
1998-99	12500	83.82	—
1999-2000	17300	38.40	54.75
2000-01	27500	58.96	—
2001-02	36500	32.73	—

*As per ESC

Statement II**Software Exports Targets 2003-04 to 2005-06**

Year	Rs. in Crores
2002-03	54000
2003-04	73000
2004-05	98000
2005-06	128000

Statement III**Steps taken by the Government to promote the Information Technology Sector**

- Export Promotion Capital Goods scheme (EPCG) has been rationalized and extended uniformly to all sectors without any threshold limit on payment of 5% duty.
- Approvals for all foreign direct investment proposals relating to the Information Technology sector, with the exception of Business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce are under the automatic route.
- Electronics Hardware Technology Park (EHTP) and Software Technology Park (STP) Schemes are implemented under the aegis of the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, through a single window mechanism of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (MSC).
- Supplies of Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items in the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) by EHTP/EOU/EPZ units shall be counted towards fulfillment of minimum Net Foreign Exchange earning as a Percentage of exports (NFEP) and the minimum Export Performance (EP), provided that the items are manufactured in the unit and attract zero rate of basic customs duty. Positive NFEP is required to be achieved in 5 years instead of every year.
- DTA access upto 50% of the FOB value of export is permitted for electronics hardware units under EOU/EPZ/EHTP schemes and the software units under EOU/EPZ/STP schemes.
- Accelerated depreciation norms extended to computers and computer peripherals to all units and capital goods of IT hardware units under Export Oriented schemes (EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP). These shall stand depreciated to overall limit of 90% over a period of 3 years.
- Special Economic Zones are being set up to enable hassle free manufacturing and trading for export purposes.
- The Depreciation on Computers is allowed @ 60%.
- In the Budget 2002-03, the peak rate of customs duty has been reduced from 35% to 30%. Customs duty has been reduced on stepper motors for computers/printers from 5% to 0%, floppy diskette and unrecorded magnetic tape from 15% to 10%, ink cartridges/ribbon assembly/ribbon gear assembly/ribbon gear carriage for use in printers for

computers from 25% to 5%, 56 items of capital goods for manufacture of semiconductors from 5% to 0%, 24 items of capital goods for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 15%, tools/moulds/dies for electronics industry from 25% to 15% and on 46 items of raw materials for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 5%.

#Customs duty on Computers and Peripherals continues to be @ 15% and all storage devices, integrated circuits, microprocessors, data display tubes and deflection components of colour monitors continue at 0%. The concessional rate of customs duty @ 5% for specified raw materials for the electronics industry (121 items) continues. Customs duty on Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items of WTO (IT and Telecom products) continues @ 15%, parts of Telecom continue @ 5% parts, components and accessories of mobile handsets including cellular telephones continue at 0%.

10. The Central Excise duty structure was rationalised from multiple rates to single rate of 16% and single rate of Special Excise Duty (SED) @ 16%, in the Budget 2001-02, and continues.
11. Information Technology Software is exempted from Customs and Excise Duty.
12. Second hand capital goods upto 10 years are freely importable.
13. EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP units are eligible for Income Tax benefit on export profits, upto 2010, in terms of Sections 10A and 10B of the Income Tax Act.
14. Exemption of withholding tax on interest on External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) is available to the IT sector.
15. Definition of Computer Software, as in Section 80 HHE of the Income Tax Act covers transmission of data.
16. Benefit of Section 80 HHE is available to supporting software developers.
17. IT Enabled Services are eligible for Income Tax benefit under Section 10A, 10B and 80HHE of the Income Tax Act.
18. DEPB rate will be same for a product whether exported as CBU or in CKD/SKD condition.
19. Threshold limit for obtaining "Export House" status reduced to Rs. 5 crores from Rs. 15 crores for Small Scale Industry, tiny sector, cottage sector, units located in North East States/Sikkim/J&K; exporters exporting to countries in Latin America/CIS/Sub Sahara Africa and units having ISO 9000 (Series) status. The status holders are eligible for the following new/special facilities:
 - * 100% retention of foreign exchange in Exchange Earners' Foreign Currency (EEFC) account;
 - * Enhancement in normal repatriation period from 180 days to 360 days.
20. The donation of computers, imported duty free by EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP units to recognised non-commercial educational institutions, registered charitable hospitals, public libraries, public funded research and development establishments, etc., two years after their use by the said units is permitted.
21. The second-hand computers and computer peripherals donated by an outside donor to Government schools and recognised schools run on a non-commercial basis by any organisation are exempted from customs duties.
22. Income by way of dividends or long-term capital gains of a Venture Capital Fund or Venture Capital company from investment made by way of equity shares in a Venture Capital Undertaking, which has been expanded to include the Software and IT sectors, will henceforth no be included in computing the total income.
23. To give thrust to Venture Capital finance, SEBI has been made the single point nodal agency for registration and regulation of both domestic and overseas venture capital funds.
24. There will be no tax on distributed or undistributed income of Venture Capital Funds. The income distributed by the VCFs will only be taxed in the hands of the investors at the rates applicable to the nature of the income. VCFs will continue to be eligible for exemption even if the shares of the VC undertaking in which the VCFs have made the initial investment are subsequently listed in a recognised stock exchange in India.
25. Under policy on portfolio investment, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) are permitted to invest in a company upto an aggregate of 24% of equity shares, extendable upto 40% subject to approvals. This limit was raised from 40% to 49% in the Budget 2001-02.

26. Tax holiday under provisions of Section 80-IA (Infrastructure Status) has been extended to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Broadband Network providers.
27. Two-way fungibility has been permitted for ADRs/GDRs. Local shares can be reconverted into ADRs/GDRs, subject to sectoral caps.
28. With a view to give a boost to the manufacturing sector it is proposed in the Budget announcements 2002-03, to allow a deduction of a further sum of 15% of the actual cost of such machinery or plant acquired and installed after 31.3.2002 in case of new industrial undertaking or substantial expansion by an existing industrial undertaking. The proposed amendment will take effect from 1.4.2003 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2003-04 and subsequent years.
29. To encourage re-location of industries to India, plant and machineries would be permitted to be imported without a licence, where the depreciated value of such relocating plants exceeds Rs. 50 crores.
30. Indian Companies wishing to invest abroad may now invest upto US\$ 100 Million on an annual basis through automatic route without being subject to the three year profitability condition, up from existing limit of US\$ 50 million (Budget announcement 2002-03).
31. Indian Companies making overseas investment in joint ventures abroad by market purchases may now do so without prior approval upto 50% of their net worth, up from existing limit of 25% (Budget announcement 2002-03).
32. To induce more investment for R&D activities, a weighted deduction of 125% on the sums paid to any university, collage or an institution or a Scientific research association for the purposes of scientific, social or statistical research is available.
33. For reduction of transaction time for export/import clearances, Ministry of Civil Aviation has finalised the scheme of "Known-Shippers" for doing away with the 24 hours cooling off period.
34. Two shifts have been introduced on week days and single shift on holidays at the Air Cargo Complexes at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chenani, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi and Goa.
35. Information Technology Act 2000 dealing with Cyber Security, Cyber Crime and other Information

security related legal aspects is in place to encourage expansion of e-commerce through internet.

[*Translation*]

Expansion of I.T. Network in Rajasthan

2177. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for the expansion of the Information Technology Network in Rajasthan during the Current Calendar year; and

(b) if so, the funds proposed to be granted by the Union Government to Rajasthan for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Department of Information Technology (DIT) through National Informatics Centre (NIC) is providing network backbone and e-Governance support to Central Government Departments, State Governments, UTs, District Administrations and other Government bodies in the country. Similar services are provided to Rajasthan State also.

NIC is presently supporting/executing the following activities in the State of Rajasthan:

- NICNET and Internet connectivity has been provided to State Government Secretariat and 32 Districts of Rajasthan State.
- Videc converencing facility has been provided at State Government Secretariat and six divisional headquarters namely Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Ajmer, Kota and Udaipur.
- Land Record Computerisation has been completed in 194 Tehsils out of 241 Tehsils.
- All the treasuries and 110 sub-treasuries in the Rajasthan State have been computerised with funding by the State Government.
- The High Court of Jodhpur and Bench at Jaipur have been fully computerised.
- A number of branches of the Rajasthan Legislative Assemblies have been computerised with funding by the State Government.
- Public Grievances Monitoring System has been implemented.

- Election & Election Management System (MIS) has been implemented.
- Websites of various departments have been closed.
- Employees Provident Fund Commissioner's offices have been computerized.
- Department of Pension & Pensioner's Welfare has been computerised;
- Director General of Foreign Trade Office-Computerisation has been completed in all branches.
- AGMARKNET Project of Department of Agriculture & Cooperation.

In addition to the above, STPI (Software Technology Parks of India) unit of DIT is also supporting the Software Technology Park at Jaipur.

(b) DIT does not allocate/sanction funds State-wise. Individual project proposals are considered for funding based on plan provisions and norms in existence.

Sports Complex

2178. SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE: Will the Minister of YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS be pleased to state:

(a) the stage of construction works in Ranital Sports Complex in Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh for which grants have been provided under the Central scheme;

(b) the amount of grant provided;

(c) the amount of grant provided by Madhya Pradesh Government to the construction agency;

(d) by when the construction work is likely to be completed; and

(e) by when the proposed construction work for Velodrome in sports complex approved under the 11th Finance Commission is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS (SHRI VIKRAM VERMA): (a) and (b) Central assistance of Rs. 40,56,500/- was approved for construction of Indoor Stadium Category-II in Ranital Sports Complex, Jabalpur and the 1st instalment of Rs. 20.00 lakh was released on

28.12.2001. As per Progress Report sent by the State Government on 10.6.2002, construction works of foundation, plinth, ground floor and tiers of stadium upto 1st floor have been completed.

(c) As per Progress Report, the State Government has already incurred expenditure of Rs. 45.00 lakhs on the above project. The Ministry has no information on the amount of grant provided by the State Government to the construction agency.

(d) It is for the State Government to expedite completion of the project. However, Central Government has also requested the State Government on 12.9.2002 to expedite completion of the project so that balance grant due could be considered for release.

(e) The Ministry has not received any proposal for construction of Velodrome in the Sports Complex, Ranital from the State Government.

Funds Provided to North-Eastern States and Sikkim

2179. SHRI BHIM DAHAL: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the amount allocated for the development of roads in the North-Eastern States and particularly in Sikkim by the Union Government, State-wise;

(b) the percentage out of the above amount used till the end of December, 2002 by the said States, separately; and

(c) the steps being taken by the Government to ensure that the unspent amount is used for the maintenance and development work of the roads of these States keeping in view their dilapidated condition?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) This Ministry is primarily responsible for the development and maintenance of National Highways -in the country including North Eastern States. As regards National Highways, the details of amounts allocated for the North-Eastern States including Sikkim and their utilization upto December, 2002 are given below:

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl.No.	State	Funds allocated during 2002-03	Expenditure upto Dec. 2002	% of amount utilized upto Dec. 2002
1.	Assam	149.37	69.92	47
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	31.10	19.14	62
3.	Manipur	22.60	11.99	53
4.	Meghalaya	35.19	15.79	45
5.	Mizoram	33.70	10.94	32
6.	Nagaland	19.00	7.02	37
7.	Sikkim	5.44	3.20	59
8.	Tripura	12.42	8.76	71

(c) The steps taken to ensure full utilization of allocation by the State include the introduction of direct payment procedure, close monitoring of progress of works, streamlining the sanction of projects and award of works etc.

Electrotherapy Electrohomoeopathy System of Medicine

2180. SHRI NAGMANI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Delhi High Court, in its verdict on November 18, 1998, had allowed an electrotherapy institution in Delhi to give diplomas/certificates in the Electrotherapy/Electrohomoeopathy system of medicine and the diploma/certificate holders could practice;

(b) if so, whether the Government have filed an appeal against this verdict in the Supreme Court and the Supreme Court upheld High Court's verdict;

(c) if so, whether the Government have passed the relevant orders in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Indo-US Nuclear Cooperation

2181. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to establish Indo-US nuclear cooperation;

(b) if so, the objectives thereof; and

(c) the steps taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Discussions have taken place on resumption of Indo-US nuclear cooperation between the respective regulatory bodies on a few selected topics.

(b) Our objective is to develop mutually beneficial international cooperation in the area of nuclear power.

(c) In the area of nuclear safety cooperation a mutually agreed programme is being discussed.

Visit of Russian Foreign Minister

2182. DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Russian External Affairs Minister recently visited India;

(b) if so, the details of discussions held;

(c) whether the resurgence of Taliban and Al-Qaida in Afghanistan was also discussed; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) No.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Findings of Study Team

2183. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a seven member team from Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai and the Institute of Plasma Research, Gandhinagar recorded huge short duration Magnetic Spine in Atoms in a sample hit by an intensive Laser shot;

(b) if so, whether such behaviour has any bearing on areas like futuristic non-storage systems and switching devices for high Magnetic fields; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir. The efforts of the Indian Team have been acknowledged to be the first in the world.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) One of the ways of storing information is divide it into 'bits' and 'write' these bits in a magnetic tape or disc. To increase the speed of storage and retrieval, we can apply giant magnetic pulses that can realign the domains in a rapid manner. The Indian Study shows such a possibility, whereby the magnetic tape can be attached to the target where magnetic pulse is created. The magnetic pulses, however, need to be made much larger and their duration much shorter than has been achieved so far; higher laser intensities than presently available to the Indian Team are mandatory for further success. This Indian Team has had a head start in this

area and access to higher laser intensities will help it make an impact in this and other applications of strategic importance for the country, such as futuristic ion acceleration and propulsion systems.

New National Telecom Policy

2184. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to formulate a new National Telecom Policy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the areas in which emphasis has been laid in the proposed new Telecom Policy; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to compete with private sector in telecom sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above.

(d) Public Sector Undertakings providing telecom services have taken various steps such as improving quality of service, introduction of new services and offering competitive tariffs, so as to effectively compete with private sector telecom service providers.

[Translation]

Ayurvedic Hospitals/Laboratories in Rajasthan

2185. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the requisite norms for opening an ayurvedic dispensary under the Central Government Health Scheme;

(b) the number of CGHS Ayurvedic dispensaries and research laboratories functioning in Rajasthan;

(c) the details thereof, location-wise;

(d) the number of staff working in these dispensaries as against the sanctioned strength, category-wise; and

(e) the details of the last Ayurvedic dispensary opened in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) There are no fixed norms for opening of an Ayurvedic dispensary under the CGHS. These units are opened as per the requirements/demands of the CGHS beneficiaries based on justification and subject to availability of manpower and resources.

The Staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance has conducted a study of the norms and functioning of the CGHS dispensaries/Units under the Indian System of Medicines and Homoeopathy and the report is pending finalisation.

(b) to (d) Jaipur is the only city in Rajasthan where CGHS dispensaries are functioning. One Ayurvedic Unit is attached to the CGHS dispensary No. (4) at D-143/A, Kaushalya Path, Basand Marg, Banipark, Jaipur. The number of staff working in this Ayurvedic Unit is given below:—

Category	Sanctioned post	Existing strength
Ayurvedic Physician	2	2
Ayurvedic Pharmacist	1	1
Female	1	Adjusted from the staff of the CGHS Allopathic dispensary
Salaiwala	1	-do-

(e) The above CGHS Ayurvedic Unit at Jaipur was opened in the year 1978.

[English]

Multi Purpose Counter Machines

2186. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the installation of Multi Purpose Counter Machines (MPCMs) was undertaken as plan activity in the beginning of Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the total MPCMs installed post offices in different States, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to install more machines in the post offices of States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of MPCMs installed in post offices upto the end of the Ninth Plan period is given in the statement.

(c) Keeping in view the resources available, and the need for optimal utilization of computers, every effort is being made to extend such facilities, in a phased manner, in all important post offices located in the country.

Statement

MPCM Installed Post Offices of the States

Sl.No.	Circle	PC Based Multi Purpose Counter Machines
1.	Andhra Pradesh	521
2.	Bihar	314
3.	Chhattisgarh	47
4.	Delhi	477
5.	Gujarat	558
6.	Haryana	303
7.	Himachal Pradesh	302
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	127
9.	Jharkhand	76
10.	Karnataka	591
11.	Kerala	454
12.	Madhya Pradesh	542
13.	Maharashtra	621
14.	North East	203
15.	Assam	413
16.	Orissa	304
17.	Punjab	411
18.	Rajasthan	356
19.	Tamil Nadu	599
20.	Uttaranchal	35
21.	Uttar Pradesh	567
22.	West Bengal	540
	Total	8361

[Translation]

Allocation of Funds for Health Care Services

2187. SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI:
SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH:
SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:
SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the funds spent by the Government on the health care services during the Ninth-Five Year Plan, State-wise;

(b) whether the funds allocated during the said period were adequate;

(c) if not, whether the Government have increased the allocation in the Tenth Five Year Plan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) A statement showing the details of funds spent State-wise on major National Health Programmes during the Ninth Five Year Plan period (1997-2002) is enclosed.

(b) to (d) Allocation of funds are made to various sectors including health, keeping in view the overall plan priorities as also the availability of resources. All possible efforts are made to mobilise funds from various bilateral and multi-lateral agencies for implementing various health programmes. State Health Systems Project with World Bank Assistance aimed at improving and upgrading the secondary health care facilities is presently under implementation in seven States. Funds are also provided under Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) for improving the functional status of rural primary health care institutions. The plan allocation for the health sector during the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) has been increased to Rs. 9253 crore from Rs. 5118 crore during the Ninth Five Year Plan period.

Health Systems Project with World Bank Assistance aimed at improving the upgrading the secondary health care facilities is presently under implementation in seven States. Funds are also provided under Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) for improving the functional status of rural primary health care institutions. The plan allocation for the health sector during the Tenth Five Year Plan period (2002-07) has been increased to Rs. 9253 crore from Rs. 5118 crores during the Ninth Five Year Plan period.

Statement

State-wise expenditure under Centrally Sponsored Diseases Control Programmes in the Deptt. of Health during the Ninth Plan period (1997-2002)

(Rs. in Lakh)

S.No.	State	Malaria	TB	Leprosy	AIDS	Blindness	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Andaman & Nicobar	744.24	3536.34	24.22	205.02	33.94	4543.76
2.	Andhra Pradesh	6244.47	27.16	2017.52	5297.94	4114.11	17701.2
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	1371.79	202.57	428.66	372.05	92.97	2468.04
4.	Assam	12440.5	732.69	1116.96	1488.29	384.6	16163.04
5.	Bihar	2313.83	2380.36	4457.21	1309.3	853.05	11313.75
6.	Chandigarh	170.9	80.92	29.12	0.00	57.7	338.64
7.	Chhattisgarh	1147.95	53.97	185.65	101.09	630.79	2119.45
8.	D & N Haveli	184.58	8.91	22.72	46.22	108.86	371.29
9.	Daman & Diu	55.07	6.52	42.56	156.74	95.66	356.55

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10.	Delhi	341.26	1095.55	160.64	1160.27	200.46	2958.18
11.	Goa	24.59	30.36	20.21	304.42	140.95	520.53
12.	Gujarat	5801.17	2438.27	1169.89	2744.92	1231.31	13385.56
13.	Haryana	833	577.18	145.14	835.79	349.09	2740.2
14.	Himachal Pradesh	360.9	763.8	278.76	1025.51	421.81	2850.78
15.	Jammu & Kashmir	408.49	299.43	388.13	301.06	245.32	1642.43
16.	Jharkhand	874.26	71.11	174.88	0	116.77	1237.02
17.	Karnataka	1732.99	1933.33	1521.1	2482.31	1339.41	9009.14
18.	Kerala	368.34	1620.63	868.8	1811.77	1022.7	5692.24
19.	Lakshadweep	35.03	4.97	22.48	42.5	230.86	335.84
20.	Madhya Pradesh	8223.03	1776.89	3420.88	1620.72	5021.11	20062.64
21.	Maharashtra	8616.07	4544.46	1935.43	5052.16	4420.44	24568.56
22.	Manipur	1381.78	314.92	418.59	1618.87	75.42	3809.58
23.	Meghalaya	1237.34	49.46	204.71	210.67	253.91	1956.09
24.	Mizoram	1075.69	42.71	278.59	798.83	193.76	2389.58
25.	Nagaland	1351.28	186.39	465.03	1639.71	76.41	3718.82
26.	Orissa	5231.82	2082.4	2302.22	643.51	3410.62	13670.57
27.	Pondicherry	87.82	25.33	34.42	159.82	27.64	335.03
28.	Punjab	864.78	542.12	339.37	1011.91	291.84	3050.02
29.	Rajasthan	6479.87	2886.06	634.06	986.37	3338.82	14325.18
30.	Sikkim	18.49	100.05	196.91	277.08	143.54	686.07
31.	Tamil Nadu	998.53	2794.64	1336.31	6969.09	6132.35	18230.92
32.	Tripura	2137.03	98.07	108.02	282.27	359.71	2985.1
33.	Uttar Pradesh	3396.9	4343.32	5079.86	3021.98	5180.12	21022.18
34.	Uttaranchal	39.19	24.89	65.13	0.00	416.77	545.98
35.	West Bengal	2245.45	3595.34	3190.99	2900.74	1028.88	12961.4
Total		78838.43	39271.14	33085.17	47282.10	42041.68	240518.5

[English]

Review on Community Information Centres Scheme

2188. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the progress made with regard to the setting up of Community Information Centres in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the target fixed in this regard has been achieved;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to achieve the target?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications & Information Technology had undertaken a scheme for setting up Community Information Centres (CICs) at 487 block headquarters in the seven North-East States and Sikkim for promoting application of Information Technology for accelerating socio-economic development of the region. The scheme is being implemented in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. 483 CICs have been set up till date.

(c) Yes, Sir. The project has been implemented with in the target date i.e. 15th August, 2002.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Telephone Connections under Discretionary Quota

2189. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of applications for telephone connections under discretionary quota received by the Union Government from Bihar during 2002-2003;

(b) the number of connections provided so far and the number of applications pending at present;

(c) the reasons, if any for delay in providing such connections; and

(d) by when pending applicants are likely to be provided telephone connection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Sir, a total number of 4491 and 287 applications were received for provision of telephone connections under discretionary quota in Bihar during 2002 and 2003 (till 31.01.2003).

(b) Out of total 4778 applications received, 2118 connections have been provided and 2660 applications are pending at present.

(c) and (d) All the applicants of pending out of turn telephones have been offered telephone connections on WLL but they are yet to take these connections.

[English]

Explosion of Pak Diplomatic Personnel

2190. SHRI VILAS MUTTMEWAR:
SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT:
SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE:
SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL:
SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE:
SHRI ADHI SANKAR:
SHRI G.J. JAVIYA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the acting High Commissioner of Pakistan and some other members of the Pakistan High Commission had been expelled recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) to (c) On February 8, 2003, Government asked Pakistan to withdraw its Charge d'Affairs and four other Pakistan High Commission officials. They were found indulging in activities incompatible with their official status.

Amendment to Drugs and Cosmetics Act

2191. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE:
SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any representation has been received by the Government from Pharmacy Council of India regarding the amendment to the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, 1940 and the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules 1945;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir. A representation was received from the Pharmacy Council of India against lowering of qualifications of Registered Pharmacists for sale of Drugs under the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules, 1945.

(b) and (c) There is no justification for lowering these qualifications. Therefore there is no proposals to amend these rules.

IT Exports

2192. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENAKTESWARLU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian IT exports to Latin America, Africa and Middle East are likely to grow by 40% in the fiscal year ending March, 2004;

(b) if so, the efforts made by the Government to consolidate Indian IT presence in Latin America, Africa and the Middle East to achieve the said target;

(c) whether any official delegations sent had visited these countries in that connection; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Export of IT to Latin America, Africa and Middle East during the last three years is as under:—

Value : Rs. crores

Region	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002
Latin America	024.87	035.99	047.11
African Countries	265.66	224.34	250.40
Middle East	193.15	440.36	327.18

It is expected that the growth rate achieved in the past would improve in the coming financial year.

(b) to (d) The Government has announced special packages to promote trade with Latin American and African countries. Electronics & Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC) under the Department of Information Technology has been regularly inviting delegations from these countries as well as sponsoring Indian delegations to visit these countries. Some of the recent initiatives of the ESC in the Latin American market are:

- (i) The ESC set up an Information Pavilion at Electronic Americas held in Sao Paulo, Brazil during 21-25 May 2001.
- (ii) ESC alongwith Engineering Export Promotion Council (EEPC) organised the Indian Industrial Product and Technology Exposition (India Tech) at Caracas, Venezuela during 18-21 July, 2001.
- (iii) ESC officials participated in World Electronic Forum held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil during 26-28 November 2001.
- (iv) While 39, delegates from Latin American countries visited INDIASOFT 2002, 47 delegates participated in INDIASOFT 2003.

ESC has signed 5 MoUs with different organizations in Latin American region to promote trade in information technology and Electronics and also prepared CD-ROM on Indian IT Industry in Portuguese and Spanish language to publicise Indian advantages in IT sector in Latin America.

Similarly, in the African and Middle East Markets, ESC organised Indian participation in major IT events during 2002-03. 26 delegates from the African continent participated in INIDASOFT 2003. ESC has also signed MoUs with counterpart organizations in Africa and Middle East.

ESC also proposes to organize Indian participation in two IT events in Middle East and one IT event in Latin America during the year 2003-04.

*[Translation]***Streamlining Passport Issuance System**

2193. SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:
SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY:
SHRI AMBAREESHA:
SHRI C. SREENIVASAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the number of pending passport applications is increasing every year in the various passport offices;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the reasons for delay in issuing them;

(c) whether issuance of fake passports is on the rise in the country;

(d) if so, the number of cases detected during each of the last three years;

(e) whether several passport officials have been found to be involved in such cases;

(f) if so, the details in this regard, State-wise; and

(g) the action taken/proposed to be taken against the guilty officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) The number of pending passport applications has come down in almost all passport offices. The total number of applications pending during 2001 was 1,50,278. This figure came down to 83,877 during 2002, a reduction of 44.18%.

(b) Statement showing the number of pending passport applications as on 31.12.01 and as on 31.12.02 at various passport offices is enclosed. States covered are also indicated. Delay in issuance of passports is mainly on account of delay in receipt of clear police verification report and incomplete applications.

(c) At times passports are fraudulently obtained or passports are subsequently tampered with.

(d) The number of cases of issuance of fraudulently obtained passports were 3 in 2000, 3 in 2001 and 3 in 2002.

(e) Yes. Eleven passport officials have been found to be involved in such cases and penalties have been imposed.

(f) State-wise details are as follows:

Delhi-2, Gujarat-1, Maharashtra-1, UP-7

(g) Some cases are still under investigation whereas penalties have been imposed in other cases.

Statement

Number of passport applications pending in various passport offices (State-wise) as on 31.12.2001 and 31.12.2002

S.No.	Name of RPO/PO	State covered	Applications pending as on 31.12.2001	Applications pending as on 31.12.2002
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Ahmedabad	Gujarat		
		Diu-UT	46907	45797
2.	Bangalore	Karnataka	Nil	2118
3.	Bareilly	11 districts of Uttar Pradesh		
		13 districts of Uttaranchal	2624	801
4.	Bhopal	Madhya Pradesh		
		Chhattisgarh	334	44

1	2	3	4	5
5.	Bhubaneswar	Orissa	949	3366
6.	Chandigarh	11 districts of Punjab 14 districts of Haryana Himachal Pradesh Chandigarh-UT	Nil	2365
7.	Chennai	17 districts of Tamil Nadu Pondicherry-UT except districts of Mahe and Yanam	13015	2426
8.	Cochin	5 districts of Kerala Lakshadweep-UT	15599	490
9.	Delhi	Delhi 5 districts of Haryana	8593	1335
10.	Ghaziabad	11 districts of Uttar Pradesh	Nil	2233
11.	Guwahati	Assam Arunachal Pradesh Manipur Meghalaya Mizoram Nagaland	Nil	96
12.	Hyderabad	20 districts of Andhra Pradesh Pondicherry-UT district of Yanam	2978	71
13.	Jaipur	Rajasthan	Nil	4120
14.	Jalandhar	6 districts of Punjab	Nil	3677
15.	Jammu	6 districts of J&K	Nil	40
16.	Kolkata	West Bengal Sikkim Tripura	Nil	313
17.	Kozhikode	7 districts of Kerala Pondicherry-UT (District of Mahe only)	14937	4497
18.	Lucknow	48 district of Uttar Pradesh	24889	1986
19.	Mumbai	Dadra & Nagar Haveli Daman 5 districts of Maharashtra	Nil	1051

1	2	3	4	5
20.	Nagpur	18 districts of Maharashtra	892	36
21.	Panaji	Goa	309	170
22.	Patna	Bihar		
		Jharkhand	7968	100
23.	Pune	6 districts of Maharashtra	Nil	Nil
24.	Ranchi	Jharkhand	Nil	Nil
25.	Srinagar	8 districts of J&K	3853	130
26.	Thane	7 districts of Maharashtra	Nil	Nil
27.	Trichy	16 districts of Tamil Nadu	Nil	3056
28.	Trivandrum	3 districts of Kerala	6431	1225
29.	Vishakhapatnam	5 districts of Andhra Pradesh	Nil	2334
Total			150278	83877

Note: Actual pendency is counted from the date, the clear police report is received.

[English]

Health Fairs

2194. SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the States where Health Fairs were organized during each of the last three years till now;

(b) the expenditure incurred thereon, fair-wise; and

(c) the places where health fairs are proposed to be organized during the current year, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Statement-I showing State wise location and amounts provided for holding the Health Melas during the last three years is enclosed.

(c) Statement-II showing the location where Health Melas are proposed to be held in the remaining part of the current year is enclosed.

Statement I

Parivar Kalyan Avam Swasthya Melas held in 2000-02 and 2002-03

Sl. No.	Place	State	No. of days	Dates	Amount Sanctioned
1	2	3	4	5	6
Year 2000-01					
1.	Mathura	Uttar Pradesh	5	17th to 29th September, 2000	Rs. 2.74 lakhs
2.	Kargil	J&K	3	21st to 23rd October, 2000	Rs. 2.17 lakhs
3.	Perfect Health Mela	Delhi	10	16th to 25th October, 2000	Rs. 2.83 lakhs
4.	Patna	Bihar	3	19th to 21st November, 2000	Rs. 3.43 lakhs

1	2	3	4	5	6
5.	Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh	5	31st Jan. to 4th Feb., 2001	Rs. 11.5 lakhs
6.	Perambur	Tamil Nadu	1	4th March, 2001	Rs. 0.75 lakhs
Year 2001-02					
7.	Badal	Punjab	3	September 15-17, 2001	Rs. 10 lakhs
8.	Sultanpur	Uttar Pradesh	5	September 30-October 4, 2001	Rs. 15 lakhs
9.	Gazipur	Uttar Pradesh	3	October 30-November 01, 2001	Rs. 12 lakhs
10.	Nafagarh	Delhi	4	November 21-24, 2001	Rs. 15 lakhs
11.	Rabongla	Sikkim	3	February 8-10, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
12.	Baldev (Mathura)	Uttar Pradesh	3	March, 15-17, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
13.	Srinagar (Pauri)	Uttaranchal	3	March 23-25, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
14.	Resai (Jammu)	J&K	3	March, 8-10, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
15.	Rajnandgoan	Chhattisgarh	5	February 17-21, 2002	Rs. 15 lakhs
16.	Raigarh	Chhattisgarh	3	February 24-26, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
17.	Marwahi	Chhattisgarh	3	March 3-5, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
18.	Swadeshi Aarogya Mela	New Delhi	5	February 7-12, 2002	Rs. 15 lakhs
19.	Yamuna Nagar	Haryana	3	March 20-23, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
20.	Silcher	Assam	3	March 19-21, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
21.	Guwahati	Assam	3	March 23-25, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
Year 2002-03					
22.	Madhubani	Bihar	3	May 4-6, 2002	Rs. 9 lakhs
23.	Phulwari Sharif	Bihar	5	15-19th June, 2002	Rs. 15 lakhs
24.	Katihar	Bihar	3	April 7-9, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
25.	Dharmshala	H.P.	3	31st May to 2nd June, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
26.	Chamba	H.P.	3	7th to 9th June, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
27.	Kolkata	West Bengal	3	6th to 8th July, 2002	Rs. 3 lakhs
28.	Bhubaneshwar	Orissa	3	20th 22nd September, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
29.	Sambalpur	Orissa	3	18th-20th April, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
30.	Koraput	Orissa	3	15-17th December, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
31.	Shillong	Meghalaya	3	9th-11th December, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
32.	Khurja	Uttar Pradesh	3	16th-20th August, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs

1	2	3	4	5	6
33.	Tikamgarh	Madhya Pradesh	3	26th-28th December, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
34.	Aizwal	Mizoram	3	22nd to 25th October, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
35.	Talkatora	Delhi	3	14th-16th November, 2002	Rs. 10 lakhs
36.	Motihari	Bihar	3	25th-27th January, 2003	Rs. 10 lakhs
37.	Muzaffarpur	Bihar	3	29th-31st January, 2003	Rs. 10 lakhs
38.	Jehanabad	Bihar	3	8th-10th February, 2003	Rs. 10 lakhs

Statement II**Health Melas proposed to be held-2002-03**

Sl.No.	Place	Dates	Organiser	Funds provided
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Dhindori, Mandla, Ujjain, Dewas, Sehore and Sagar in MP	Confirmed dates awaited form the State Govt.	State Government	Rs. 10 lakhs for each venue
2.	Chhapra, Kankarbagh (Patna), Bihar	1-3 March, 2003 (Chhapra) date for Kankarbagh awaited	IMA, Bihar	-do-
3.	Jammu, J&K	1st week March, 2003	State Government	Funds to be released
4.	Imphal, Manipur	3-5 March, 2003	-do-	Rs. 10 lakhs for each venue
5.	Agartala, Tripura	6-10 March, 2003	-do-	-do-
6.	Mysore	2nd Week March, 03	-do-	-do-
7.	Dharavi (Mumbai,) Nagpur, Kolhapur in Maharashtra	29-31 March, 2003 (Dharavi) dates for Nagpur & Kolhapur awaited	IMA at Dharavi, State Govt. for Nagpur & Kolhapur	-do-
8.	Sundergarh, Dhenkanal, Orssa	5-7 March, 2003 (Sundergarh)	State Govt.	Rs. 10 lakhs
9.	Barpeta, Assam	-do-	-do-	-do-
10.	Kinoor, Shimla, Mandi and Hamirpur at HP	-do-	-do-	Rs. 10 lakhs for each venue
11.	Dhanbad, Hazaribagh and Ranchi in Jharkhand	-do-	-do-	Funds to be released
12.	Gopeshwar, Rudraprayag, Kotdwar in Uttaranchal	-do-	-do-	-do-

1	2	3	4	5
13.	Azamgarh, Deoria and Banda in Uttar Pradesh	5-7 March, 2003 (Sundergarh)	State Govt.	Funds to be released
14.	East Delhi and Sangam Vihar, Delhi	-do-	-do-	-do-
15.	UT Daman & Diu	-do-	-do-	Rs. 3.61 lakhs released

Constitution of Expert Group

2195. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the BSNL has constituted an Expert Group to devise long term strategy for its ISD (International Subscriber Dialling) operations;

(b) if so, the terms of reference of this Expert Group;

(c) the advantages accruing to BSNL as a result of venturing into ISD services;

(d) whether the costs and benefits have been worked out; and

(e) if so, the additional investment required immediately by BSNL for venturing into ISD services?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) No Sir, however internal committees have been set up to examine various aspects relating to ISD operations.

(c) BSNL will be able to tap the International Traffic and thus add to its revenue.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) An investment of approximately Rs. 735 million will be required immediately to enter into ISD Services.

Assistance to IT Companies

2196. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether mid-sized IT services and business process outsourcing companies are doing the rounds of investment banking circles;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether banks have been asked to help these IT companies by providing loan etc. to enable them to improve the IT services in the country; and

(d) if so, the details of necessary assistance to be provided to these companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) to (c) The Department of Information Technology (DIT) does not keep track of mergers, acquisition and amalgamation taking place in the private sector. This is normal in business consolidation.

(d) A statement showing steps taken by the Government to promote IT companies in the country is enclosed.

Statement

Steps taken by the Government to promote the Information Technology Sector

- Export Promotion Capital Goods scheme (EPCG) has been rationalized and extended uniformly to all sectors without any threshold limit on payment of 5% duty.
- Approvals for all foreign direct investment proposals relating to the Information Technology sector, with the exception of Business-to-consumer (B2C) e-commerce are under the automatic route.
- Electronics Hardware Technology Park (EHTP) and Software Technology Park (STP) Schemes are implemented under the aegis of the Department of Information Technology, Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, through a single window mechanism of the Inter-Ministerial Standing Committee (IMSC).

4. Supplies of Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items in the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA) by EHTP/EOU/EPZ units shall be counted towards fulfillment of minimum Net Foreign Exchange earning as a Percentage of exports (NFEP) and the minimum Export Performance (EP), provided that the items are manufactured in the unit and attract zero rate of basic customs duty. Positive NFEP is required to be achieved in 5 years instead of every year.
5. DTA access upto 50% of the FOB value of export is permitted for electronics hardware units under EOU/EPZ/EHTP schemes and the software units under EOU/EPZ/STP schemes.
6. Accelerated depreciation norms extended to computers and computer peripherals to all units and capital goods of IT hardware units under Export Oriented schemes (EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP). These shall stand depreciated to overall limit of 90% over a period of 3 years.
7. Special Economic Zones are being set up to enable hassle free manufacturing and trading for export purposes.
8. The Depreciation on Computers is allowed @ 60%.
9. In the Budget 2002-03, the peak rate of customs duty has been reduced from 35% to 30%. Customs duty has been reduced on stepper motors for computers/printers from 5% to 0%, floppy diskette and unrecorded magnetic tape from 15% to 10%, ink cartridges/ribbon assembly/ribbon gear assembly/ribbon gear carriage for use in printers for computers from 25% to 5%, 56 items of capital goods for manufacture of semiconductors from 5% to 0%, 24 items of capital goods for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 15%, tools/moulds/dies for electronics industry from 25% to 15% and on 46 items of raw materials for manufacture of electronic components from 25-35% to 5%.

#Customs duty on Computers and Peripherals continues to be @ 15% and all storage devices, integrated circuits, microprocessors, data display tubes and deflection components of colour monitors continue at 0%. The concessional rate of customs duty @ 5% for specified raw materials for the electronics industry (121 items) continues. Customs duty on Information Technology Agreement (ITA-1) items of WTO (IT and Telecom products) continues @ 15%, parts of Telecom continue @ 5% parts, components and accessories of mobile handsets including cellular telephones continue at 0%.
10. The Central Excise duty structure was rationalised from multiple rates to single rate of 16% and single rate of Special Excise Duty (SED) @ 16%, in the Budget 2001-02, and continues.
11. Information Technology Software is exempted from Customs and Excise Duty.
12. Second hand capital goods upto 10 years are freely importable.
13. EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP units are eligible for Income Tax benefit on export profits, upto 2010, in terms of Sections 10A and 10B of the Income Tax Act.
14. Exemption of withholding tax on interest of External Commercial Borrowings (ECBs) is available to the IT sector.
15. Definition of Computer Software, as in Section 80 HHE of the Income Tax Act covers transmission of data.
16. Benefit of Section 80 HHE is available to supporting software developers.
17. IT Enabled Services are eligible for Income Tax benefit under Section 10A, 10B and 80HHE of the Income Tax act.
18. DEPB rate will be same for a product whether exported as CBU or in CKD/SKD condition.
19. Threshold limit for obtain "Export House" status reduced to Rs. 5 crores from Rs. 15 crores for Small Scale Industry, tiny sector, cottage sector, units located in North East States/Sikkim/J&K; exporters exporting to countries in Latin America/CIS/Sub Sahara Africa and units having ISO 9000 (Series) status. The status holders are eligible for the following new/special facilities:
 - * 100% retention of foreign exchange in Exchange Earners' Foreign Currency (EEFC) account;
 - * Enhancement in normal repatriation period from 180 days to 360 days.
20. The donation of computers, imported duty free by EOU/EPZ/STP/EHTP units to recognised non-commercial educational institutions, registered charitable hospitals, public libraries, public funded research and development establishments, etc., two years after their use by the said units is permitted.

21. The second-hand computers and computer peripherals donated by an outside donor to Government schools and recognised schools run on a non-commercial basis by any organisation are exempted from customs duties.
22. Income by way of dividends or long-term capital gains of a Venture Capital Fund or Venture Capital company from investment made by way of equity shares in a Venture Capital Undertaking, which has been expanded to include the Software and IT sectors, will henceforth no be included in computing the total income.
23. To give thrust to Venture Capital finance, SEBI has been made the single point nodal agency for registration and regulation of both domestic and overseas venture capital funds.
24. There will be no tax on distributed or undistributed income of venture Capital Funds. The income distributed by the VCFs will only be taxed in the hands of the investors at the rates applicable to the nature of the income. VCFs will continue to be eligible for exemption even if the shares of the VC undertaking in which the VCFs have made the initial investment are subsequently listed in a recognised stock exchange in India.
25. Under policy on portfolio investment, Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) are permitted to invest in a company upto an aggregate of 24% of equity shares, extendable upto 40% subject to approvals. This limit was raised from 40% to 49% in the Budget 2001-02.
26. Tax holiday under provisions of Section 80-IA (Infrastructure Status) has been extended to Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and Broadband Network providers.
27. Two-way fungibility has been permitted for ADRs/GDRs. Local shares can be reconverted into ADRs/GDRs, subject to sectoral caps.
28. With a view to give a boost to the manufacturing sector it is proposed in the Budget announcements 2002-03, to allow a deduction of a further sum of 15% of the actual cost of such machinery or plant acquired and installed after 31.3.2002 in case of new industrial undertaking or substantial expansion by an existing industrial undertaking. The proposed amendment will take effect from 1.4.2003 and will, accordingly, apply in relation to the assessment year 2003-04 and subsequent years.
29. To encourage re-location of industries to India, plant and machineries would be permitted to be imported without a licence, where the depreciated value of such relocating plants exceeds Rs. 50 crores.
30. Indian Companies wishing to invest abroad may now invest upto US\$ 100 Million on an annual basis through automatic route without being subject to the three year profitability condition, up from existing limit of US\$ 50 million (Budget announcement 2002-03).
31. Indian Companies making overseas investment in joint ventures abroad by market purchases may now do so without prior approval upto 50% of their net worth, up from existing limit of 25% (Budget announcement 2002-03).
32. To include more investment for R&D activities, a weighted deduction of 125% on the sums paid to any university, collages or an institution or a Scientific research association for the purposes of scientific, social or statistical research is available.
33. For reduction of transaction time for export/import clearances, Ministry of Civil Aviation has finalised the scheme of "Known-Shippers" for doing away with the 24 hours cooling off period.
34. Two shifts have been introduced on week days and single shift on holidays at the Air Cargo Complexes at Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Delhi and Goa.
35. Information Technology Act 2000 dealing with Cyber Security, Cyber Crime and other Information security related legal aspects is in place to encourage expansion of e-commerce through internet.

Jipmer Hospital in Pondicherry

2197. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the capacity of various wards in Jipmer Hospital, Pondicherry is inadequate in proportion to the increased patient arrivals and several medicines are not being provided to the patients due to lack of funds; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Jawaharlal Institute of Postgraduate Medical Education and Research, Pondicherry has a bed capacity of 912. The bed strength at the Institute will increase further with the completion of capital works of New Paying Wards and New Emergency Services Department. In addition, Xth Plan Outlay of Rs. 150.00 Crores has been provided for augmenting/expansion of facilities for providing quality patient care etc. in the Institute. Adequate funds are also made available so as to ensure availability of essential drugs.

[Translation]

Vacant Posts of SCs/STs

2198. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether some posts of Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes in different categories in various Departments and undertakings of his Ministry are vacant;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the employees working in the said Departments and undertakings have been promoted and fresh appointments made during the last three years;

(d) if so, the year-wise and category-wise appointments made under various categories during the said period and the current year till date;

(e) whether the prescribed rules have been followed regarding the recruitment and promotion of candidates from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes; and

(f) if not, the remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Details of vacant posts group wise are given below:

Group	SC	ST
A	25	32
B	29	27
C	43	54
D	04	01

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Year wise & category wise appointments made during the last three years and the current year till date is given below:

Group	2000		2001		2002		2003 (till date)	
	SC	ST	SC	ST	SC	ST	SC	ST
A	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
B	1	—	3	1	—	—	—	—
C	11	4	8	—	5	2	—	—
D	6	2	6	4	4	1	—	—

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Commissioning of New Ports

2199 SHRI MANSINH PATEL:
SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have conducted any study to identify the viability of commissioning new ports

in order to cater to the growing need for port facilities in the country;

(b) if so, the findings of the study;

(c) by when the new ports are likely to be commissioned; and

(d) the quantum of goods shipped from abroad and also to the foreign countries during the last three years; port-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI):

(a) to (c) Major Ports fall under the administrative domain of the Central Government. At present, there is no proposal to set up a new major port. Development of minor ports (non-major ports) is within the ambit of the respective State Government. However, Ministry of Shipping has decided to get a study conducted for development of coastal shipping and minor ports. Director

General (Shipping) Mumbai, has been requested to take necessary action to engage consultant for the proposed study.

(d) A statement showing the quantum of goods shipped from abroad and also shipped to the foreign countries during the last three years, port-wise, is enclosed.

Statement

Quantum of Goods Shipped from/to Abroad in Respect of Various Major Ports During Last 3 Years

(In '000 Tonnes)

Name of the Port	Quantum of Goods Shipped*					
	from foreign countries			to foreign countries		
	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Kolkata	18167	17508	18829	1731	2347	3741
Paradip	4237	6015	5742	1933	3794	4415
Visakhapatnam	12914	12289	13438	6298	8170	9037
Chennai	12458	13001	11951	9827	11567	12142
Tuticorin	3732	3698	4094	2029	2396	3147
Cochin	6956	6356	5770	850	1066	1222
New Mangalore	7963	8226	7329	5911	5349	5724
Mormugao	2278	2558	3564	14784	15813	18153
Mumbai	16637	13606	13180	3904	3579	3380
Jawahar Lal Nehru	8068	8843	10025	5831	7829	9748
Kandla	28099	22853	24867	3402	4400	6854
All Major Ports	121509	114953	118789	56500	66310	77563

*Excluding transshipment traffic handled

[English]

Cruise Terminals

2200. SHRI SHASHI KUMAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have identified any potential cruise terminals in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to establish cruise terminals in coastal areas of Karnataka between Mangalore and Karwar; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI):

(a) and (b) It is felt that Major Ports at Mumbai, Mormugao, New Mangalore and Cochin have potential to attract cruise vessels. These Ports have been receiving cruise vessels for the last few years.

(c) and (d) The Major Port at New Mangalore has plans to modernize/establish passenger terminal which can be used for cruise vessels.

New Facilities by BSNL

2201. SHRI V. VETRISLVAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal is under consideration of BSNL to provide new facilities to the consumers of basic phone on the lines of cellular consumers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited is currently providing High speed Internet access to its basic phone subscribers through the Direct Internet Access system (DIAS). Further, projects have been initiated to provide the following new services to its basic phone subscribers through its franchisee (s).

(i) Interactive voice response system based services like Telephone Horoscope, Tele-Astrology, Tele-vaastu, Cricket score, World Cup cricket contests, etc.

(ii) Broadband services like High-speed Internet access, Video-on-demand, Video-broadcast, etc.

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

[Translation]

Development of Roads in Rajasthan

2202. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of targets fixed, estimated cost and total funds approved with regard to development of roads in Rajasthan; and

(b) the funds provided by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and other International Financial Institutions for the development and improvement of roads in the State during the last three years along with the amount actually spent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) This Ministry is responsible for the development and maintenance of only National

Highways. In the Annual Plan 2002-03, Rs. 82.5 crores have been allocated for development of National Highways in Rajasthan. As on date 70 number of works costing Rs. 136.92 crores are in progress. For current financial year the target has been fixed for 450 km. length of improvement of riding quality, widening of 120 km length from single lane to two lane, widening of 9.5 km length of 2-lane to 4-lane, strengthening of 10 km length and construction of 4 number of bridges.

(b) The Government of India has not taken any loan assistance from the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and other International Financial Institutions for the last three years for development and improvement of National Highways in Rajasthan. However, Rs. 102.43 crores have been spent in last three years for development of National Highways in the State of Rajasthan from the loans taken earlier from the above agencies. These works have been completed.

[English]

Reservation Policy

2203. SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have strictly followed the reservation policy in providing jobs in the Government Departments and Autonomous Institutions as well as attached offices coming under his Ministry in as far as the Gazetted jobs or Class I and Class II employments are concerned;

(b) if so, the details thereof, Autonomous Institution-wise;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to fill up the vacant posts in the Government Sector and Public Sectors;

(d) whether the Union Government and States find it difficult to fill up the reserved posts (Class I and Class II in both Government Sector and Public Sector) designated for the persons belonging to SC/ST and OBC; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Government to fill up such vacant posts?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) This Ministry and the Autonomous Bodies under its administrative control are following Government policy and guidelines relating to reservation of jobs.

(b) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[*Translation*]

Supply of Atomic Fuel to Kudankulam Plant

2204. SHRI C.N. SINGH:
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any agreement has been signed with Russia for the supply of atomic fuel to the Kudankulam Atomic Power Plant;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) by when the supply of the atomic fuel to this plant is likely to start; and

(d) by when the Kudankulam power plant is likely to be commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Nuclear Power Corporation of India Ltd., a Public Sector Undertaking of this Department, is setting up two units, each of 1000 MWe capacity nuclear power reactors at Kudankulam, Tamilnadu in cooperation with Russian Federation. An agreement for the supply of fuel for these power reactors was signed recently.

(c) The fuel supply will start in the year 2006.

(d) The scheduled dates of commencement of commercial operations are December 2007 for the first unit and December 2008 for the second unit.

[*English*]

Foreign Investment in IT Sector

2205. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Foreign Investors are keen to make investment in the Information Technology sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof with proposals under the consideration of the Government; and

(c) the steps taken to clear such proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government is making continuous efforts to make India an attractive destination for FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) in the region by providing an internationally competitive investment climate in terms of policy framework, procedures and institutions. In order to catalyse FDI, the Government has also permitted access through the automatic route for FDI up to 100% in most activities.

Many MNCs such as GE, American Express, Ford British Airways, etc. have chosen India for back office support services. IT is one of the sectors where the country has been benefited from the state-of-the-art technology. According to a recent World Bank study, India is the preferred location for software vendors for its quality and cost. Data on FDI in regard to Information Technology Sector (sub-sector-wise) for the period from 1.1.2000 to 31.12.2002 is as under:

(Rupees in Millions)		
S.No.	Name of the Sub-sector	All countries
1.	Computer Software	42,793.56
2.	Electronics	12,752.17
3.	Computer Hardware	262.35
4.	Other (Software)	622.39

The pendency position in respect of FDI proposals varies on a daily basis, as receipt and disposal of FIPB applications is a continuous process. Government has put in place a transparent and time-bound approval mechanism for dealing with proposals involving Foreign Direct Investment.

National Highway Projects

2206. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of National Highway Projects submitted/sanctioned for different States particularly Maharashtra and Karnataka during the current year till date;

(b) whether any contracts were awarded and money sanctioned for the purpose;

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

(d) whether extension of time was given to some contractors;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether some contractors were debarred by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI); and

(g) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) Details are given at Statement-I including that of Maharashtra and Karnataka.

(b) and (c) The State-wise list of contracts awarded and cost thereof are given at statement-II. The allotment of funds is done State-wise and not work-wise;

(d) and (e) No extension of time was given for any work sanctioned during the current year.

(f) and (g) The list of contractors who have been debarred by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is given at statement-III.

Statement I

Sl. No.	State	Number of projects submitted for sanction during the year 2002-03	Estimated cost (Rs. in crores)	Disposal status		
				Sanctioned	Returned to State PWD	Pending in Ministry
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.	Andhra Pradesh	54	142.85	40	8	6
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	5	17.42	3	—	—
3.	Assam	39	190.00	32	—	—
4.	Bihar	103	298.81	23	—	—
5.	Chandigarh	2	3.77	—	1	1
6.	Chhattisgarh	41	92.00	19	—	22
7.	Delhi	3	14.43	3	—	—
8.	Goa	24	127.73	4	12	8
9.	Gujarat	52	155.60	40	5	7
10.	Haryana	28	156.85	13	4	11
11.	Himachal Pradesh	45	131.06	23	15	7
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	3	5.5	1	—	2
13.	Jharkhand	42	88.06	14	—	—
14.	Karnataka	64	144.04	49	—	15
15.	Kerala	41	120.07	35	—	6
16.	Madhya Pradesh	90	190.00	46	44	—
17.	Maharashtra	78	169.00	71	6	1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	Manipur	26	48.88	5	—	—
19.	Meghalaya	20	36.74	11	—	—
20.	Mizoram	11	51.01	7	—	—
21.	Nagaland	14	16.03	8	—	—
22.	Orissa	45	110.89	42	—	3
23.	Pondicherry	2	3.32	2	—	—
24.	Punjab	46	114.85	20	11	15
25.	Rajasthan	63	141.35	49	7	7
26.	Tamil Nadu	84	152.48	58	12	14
27.	Uttaranchal	25	49.01	1	24	—
28.	Uttar Pradesh	161	130.77	43	17	101
29.	West Bengal	26	—	24	—	2

Statement II

Sl. No.	State	Number of contracts awarded	Cost of tenders awarded (Rs. in crores)	Number of contract at tender stage	Number of contracts not yet floated
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	25	58.53	10	5
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	1	—	2	—
3.	Assam	25	—	4	3
4.	Bihar	8	23.68	15	—
5.	Chandigarh	—	—	—	—
6.	Chhattisgarh	16	27.14	3	—
7.	Delhi	1	9.51	2	—
8.	Goa	1	2.10	3	—
9.	Gujarat	14	22.28	26	—
10.	Haryana	11	36.74	1	1
11.	Himachal Pradesh	11	23.11	5	7
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	1	2.21	—	—
13.	Jharkhand	12	24.17	2	—
14.	Karnataka	44	91.88	5	—

1	2	3	4	5	6
15.	Kerala	17	31.14	13	5
16.	Madhya Pradesh	39	78.00	2	5
17.	Maharashtra	55	119.82	16	—
18.	Manipur	3	—	2	—
19.	Meghalaya	8	—	3	—
20.	Mizoram	5	—	2	—
21.	Nagaland	7	—	1	—
22.	Orissa	27	43.43	15	—
23.	Pondicherry	1	1.00	1	—
24.	Punjab	11	24.18	6	3
25.	Rajasthan	44	69.88	5	—
26.	Tamil Nadu	33	55.83	17	8
27.	Uttaranchal	1	0.21	—	—
28.	Uttar Pradesh	34	73.54	7	2
29.	West Bengal	10	13.59	7	7

Statement III

The details regarding the contractors, who are debarred by National Highways Authority of India are as follows:—

- (i) M/s. Punj Lloyd has been debarred for one year with effect from November 1, 1999 for misrepresentation of facts in their bidding documents and
- (ii) M/s. PT Sumber Mitra Jaya has been debarred in October 2001 from participating in any bidding process in view of non-adherence of contract condition by them. No time period had been indicated for the debarment. The matter is under litigation.

Ban on Drugs

2207. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in October, 2002 the Government had decided to ban certain drugs which were declared unsafe;

(b) if so, whether the Government instead of banning the same extended the deadline for their circulation upto August 1, 2003; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) The Drugs formulations of Terfenadine and Astemizole for human use were earlier prohibited for manufacture, sale and distribution with effect from 1st August, 2003 through a Gazette Notification GSR 732(E) dated 29.10.2002. The matter has been further reviewed and the manufacture of these drugs formulation is now being prohibited with immediate effect and their sale and distribution with effect from 1st April, 2003.

Setting up of Telephone Exchanges

2208. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI:
SHRI Y.V. RAO:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to set up new telephone exchanges in the rural, tribal and remote areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) The expenditure likely to be incurred thereon;

(d) whether the Government propose to link all the telephone exchanges having 1000 lines with optical fibre cable or microwave system in the country; and

(e) if so, by when all the exchanges are likely to be connected with OFC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per the present policy, planning for the rural areas is preferred using WLL (Wireless in Local Loop) systems. However, if WLL solution is not possible due to technical reason, new exchanges are planned with minimum registration of 75 with in the local area of the exchange. The details of the exchanges planned to be provided are given in the statement.

(c) The likely expenditure is about Rs. 183 Crores for WLL during the current year.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) Government has a policy to provide reliable media (OFC, Microwave system etc.) to all exchanges by the year 2003.

Statement

Targets for the proposed Exchanges in Rural/Tribal Areas during 2002-03

Sl.No.	States	New Exchanges Proposed
1	2	3
1.	Andhra Pradesh	80
2.	Andaman & Nicobar	02
3.	Assam	40
4.	Bihar	25
5.	Jharkhand	10
6.	Gujarat	25
7.	Haryana	25
8.	Himachal Pradesh	20
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	10

1	2	3
10.	Karnataka	30
11.	Kerala	35
12.	Madhya Pradesh	25
13.	Chhattisgarh	20
14.	Maharashtra	95
15.	N.E.-I*	14
16.	N.E.-II*	25
17.	Orissa	30
18.	Punjab	30
19.	Rajasthan	40
20.	Tamil Nadu	55
21.	Uttar Pradesh	60
22.	Uttaranchal	14
23.	West Bengal	50
Total		760

NE-I includes Meghalaya, Tripura & Mizoram States

*NE-II** includes Manipur, Nagaland & Arunachal Pradesh States

Development of Ports

2209. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE:
SHRI PADAM SEN CHOUDHRY:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any plan for improving infrastructural facilities of Ports in the country to international standards;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) to (c) Development of ports in the country, which includes improvements in infrastructural facilities, is an ongoing process to cope with the demands of Maritime trade. The plans for development of major ports are included in the Five Year Plans of the Government for the Port Sector. During the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007), an amount of Rs. 4531.29 crores has been allocated for development of major ports. Out of this,

Rs. 450.00 crores are to be provided as budgetary support from the Government and Rs. 4081.29 crores are to be raised by the ports concerned through their own internal and extra budgetary resources. In addition, an investment of about Rs. 11257.00 crores by the private sector is also envisaged in major ports during the Tenth Plan Period.

The focus in the major ports during the Tenth Five Year Plan period will, inter-alia, be on improving productivity through technological upgradation, provision of cost effective services and enhancement of service quality. This is planned to be achieved through upgradation/conversion of existing conventional berths to suit emerging requirements; construction of new berths; upgradation of cargo handling equipment and maintenance procedures; redesigning and upgradation of internal road network and circulation systems where required; upgradation of storage facilities and other port infrastructure coupled with commercial accounting practices, improved equipment and labour productivity, optimization of work force, training, optimal use of information technology etc.

It has also been decided to develop a hub port each on the East and West coasts of the country, at Chennai and Jawaharlal Nehru Ports respectively and to develop an international container transshipment terminal at Vallarpadam, Cochin so as to tap the increasing potential for container traffic.

Bio-Equivalence Studies on Medicines

2210. SHRI P.R. KHUNTE: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any permission from DCGI is required to conduct Bio-equivalence studies on medicines for exports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is equally applicable for the new drugs which have been permitted in the country and are not yet approved for marketing in the country; and

(d) if so, the guidelines for conducting such bio-equivalence studies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) to (c) Requirement of Bioequivalence study on medicine for export depends upon the requirements of an importing country, and it is not insisted upon by the office of the DCG (I).

(d) Bioequivalence studies are conducted as per accepted scientific norms. However, draft guidelines for conducting Bioequivalence studies in the country are also being prepared.

INDIASOFT-2003

2211. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENAKTESWARLU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC) is organising a three day event called Indiasoft-2003;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the ESC has made any efforts to invite countries like Latin America and Africa to participate in Indiasoft-2003;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps taken/to be taken by the Government to concentrate on non-traditional markets for Indian software?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The event is being organized by the Electronics and Computer Software Export Promotion Council (ESC) since the year 2001 and INIDASOFT 2003 was the third in the series held between February 20-22, 2003 at New Delhi. The event provided platform to small and medium enterprises in the IT sector to interact with the foreign delegates participating in the event from various countries. The event included international level Conferences on contemporary issues in the field of IT and an Exhibition. INDIASOFT 2003 was attended by about 650 delegates which included 170 foreign delegates from 34 countries and 44 Indian IT companies displayed their capabilities in the exhibition.

(c) Yes, Sir. 73 delegates from Latin America and Africa participated in INDIASOFT 2003.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Government have taken several steps to promote export of computer software and services to non-traditional markets; such as

(i) Awareness programmes and focussed Road Shows in collaboration with the industry,

organised periodically in potential markets such as EU, Japan, Latin America, etc.

- (ii) Financial support to industry for organizing and participating in international fairs, exhibitions & conferences for marketing Indian strength in the sector.
- (iii) Bilateral cooperation strengthened with countries of Europe, Latin America, Japan, Australia and Asian region by entering in to Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs). These MoUs have been used to provide platform for the industry to establish contacts with counterparts in these countries and to explore and increase possibilities of exports.

Second Phase of National Highway Development Project

2212. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry has proposed afresh the additional levy of 30 paise cess on petrol and diesel to fund the second phase of national highway development project proposed to create East-West and North-South corridor of six lane roads;

(b) if so, whether the Ministry had a meeting with the Finance Ministry on this issue;

(c) if so, whether the Ministry needs about Rs. 35,000 crores for funding the second phase of the national highway development project; and

(d) if so, when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RET.D.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Ministry has proposed to levy an additional cess of 30 paise per litre on petrol and diesel for funding of second phase of the National Highways Development Project (NHDP).

(c) A proposal is under process for Phase-II Programme of NHDP for rehabilitation and upgradation of existing 2-lane road to 4/6-lane Divided Carriageway Configuration for the Sections on North-South and East-West Corridor of NHDP and other projects at a cost of Rs. 32741 crore to be executed by National Highways Authority of India.

(d) Announcement in this regard has been made in the budget for 2003-2004.

[*Translation*]

Vacant Posts of SCs/STs

2213. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether some posts of SCs/STs under various categories are vacant in various departments and undertakings under his Ministry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether various categories of the employees working in these departments and undertakings under his Ministry have been promoted and fresh recruitments made during the last three years;

(d) if so, the Year-wise and Category-wise details of fresh recruitments made under various categories during this period and in the current year till date;

(e) whether the prescribed rules have been followed with regard to the recruitment and promotion of persons belonging to SC/ST categories; and

(f) if not, the remedial steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) to (f) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[*English*]

Roaming Service on WLL Phone

2214. SHRI V. VETRISILVAN:
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telephone Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has sought clarification from Reliance Infocom and Tata Indicom for providing roaming service on their WLL phone beyond their jurisdiction in response to the complaints received from Cellular operators;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of both the above companies thereto; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure that limited Mobile Service of the WLL is operated as per the terms and conditions of the licence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) TRAI has sought clarifications only from M/s Reliance Infocom Ltd. for providing roaming service on their WLL phone beyond Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA). The clarification sought from M/s Tata Teleservices Ltd. was for providing WLL-M service beyond Delhi Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA).

(c) and (d) Both the companies have affirmed that they are not violating any licence condition. However, M/s Reliance Infocom Ltd. has given indication to provide Call Forwarding Facility and registration in multiple SDCAs as an additional option to its consumers. TRAI will examine the combination of these two Value Added Services to see as to whether any licence condition gets violated.

Optical Fibre Cables in Madhya Pradesh

2215. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the Telephone exchanges functioning in Madhya Pradesh are connected with Optical Fibre Cables (OFC);

(b) if not, the position as on 28.2.2003; and

(c) by when all these telephone exchanges are likely to be connected with optical fibre in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The position regarding provision of Optical Fibre Cable to Telephone exchanges in Madhya Pradesh is as follows:

(i) Total number of exchanges	2741
(ii) Number of exchanges connected with Optical Fibre Cable	2384

(iii) Number of exchanges on other reliable media like Microwave and Satellite	298
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(iv) Number of exchanges on media like Overhead and VHF	59
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(c) Out of the 59 exchanges with Overhead/VHF media, 44 exchanges will be provided with Optical Fibre Cable and 15 exchanges will be provided with other reliable media like Microwave and Satellite during 2003-2004. There is no plan to connect all exchanges with Optical Fibre Cable.

Non-Payment of Telephone Bills

2216. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of telephone subscribers have defaulted in payment of telephone bills to MTNL and BSNL;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the total outstanding dues which are to be recovered from the subscribers as on date;

(c) the details of loss suffered by the MTNL and BSNL as a result thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to recover the arrears?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) The amount involved in the cases of default constitutes about 3% of the amount billed by Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), the two public sector telephone providers. The total 3-month old arrears of MTNL and BSNL against various Government and Private subscribers as on 31.12.2002 is as under:

	Govt. Depts.	Private
MTNL	18 crores	857 crores
BSNL	306 crores	2349 crores

(c) The amount written off by MTNL and BSNL in 2002-2003 is Rs. 26.02 Lakhs and Rs. 12.49 Crores. The annual revenue of MTNL & BSNL are in excess of

Rs. 6000 crores and Rs. 20000 Crores respectively. Thus the amount written off each year is even less than 0.06% of the total amount billed.

(d) Recovery of outstanding dues is a continuous process and following efforts are made to realise the arrears.

1. The defaulters are disconnected when their dues are unpaid.
2. Targets for liquidation of outstanding is set and performance monitored against them each year.
3. High Power Committees and Liquidation Boards have been set up to facilitate liquidation of dues.
4. The collection efficiency is monitored each month.
5. Outstanding Pursuit Cells are functioning at Headquarters level and also at the Circle level.
6. Where necessary, after disconnection of telephones, legal action is also initiated for recovery of the dues.

Additional Spectrum to Cell Operators

2217. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have constituted a Committee to look into the demands of Cellular operators regarding allocation of Additional Spectrum;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the guidelines to be followed by this Committee;

(d) the specific demands of Cellular operators in this regard; and

(e) by when the Committee is likely to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. Considering the demand of Cellular operators for additional spectrum to meet the subscriber growth, the Government have constituted a Committee in the end January, 2003, including representatives from Cellular Service Providers Association, among others. The Committee is examining in detail the current utilization of assigned spectrum and network design practices followed by various Cellular

Operators from the point of view of optimal spectrum utilization as well as its comparison with internationally used norms and practices. The report of the Committee is likely to be submitted shortly.

Protection of Children from HIV/AIDS

2218. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether as per the report of the Department of Women and Child Development more than one lakh children in the country are suffering from HIV/AIDS;

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

(c) the remedial measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to check the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Report entitled "India-First Periodic Report, 2001" prepared by the Department of Women & Child Development for the Convention on the Rights of the Child at page 183 has reported the estimated number of children living with HIV/AIDS in the country as more than one lakh. State-wise break up of the number of children living with HIV/AIDS is not indicated in the said report.

(c) In order to prevent transmission of HIV from an infected mother to her child, Government of India is in the process of up-scaling prevention of parent to child transmission (PPTCT) programme. The programme has already covered 74 medical colleges and 15 district hospitals in six high prevalence States viz. Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Manipur, Nagaland and Tamil Nadu. Besides, the Government of India has launched a comprehensive National AIDS Control Programme, currently under implementation throughout the country as a centrally sponsored scheme with the following components:

- Preventive interventions for high risk populations through targeted interventions adopting a multi-pronged strategy including peer counseling and behaviour change communication.
- Preventive interventions for the general population through programmes for blood safety, voluntary counseling and testing services, information education and communication (IEC) and awareness building among adolescents.

- Provision of low cost care and support services through community care services, treatment of opportunistic infections and prevention of occupational exposure.
- Collaborative efforts to promote inter-sectoral programme activities including interventions and public-private partnerships.
- Capacity building in respect of technical and managerial skills for programme implementation through surveillance, training, monitoring and evaluation, technical resource groups, operational research and programme management.

[Translation]

Panic Created by SMS Message

2219. SHRI TARACHAND BHAGORA:
COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY:
SHRI RAM RAGHUNATH CHAUDHARY:
SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI:
SHRI PADAM SEN CHOUDHRY:
SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the inauguration of a Mobile Company in Rai Bareilly, panic and utter confusion prevailed for some time when S.M.S. Message alongwith the photograph of Osama Bin Laden was received on the mobile phone as reported in the 'Dainik Jagran' dated January 24, 2003;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether any inquiry has been conducted into it;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House

[English]

Differential Rental Charges in West Bengal Telecom Circle

2220. SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Telecom Divisions in West Bengal circle have been regulating services to the customers where while some are charging rental of Rs. 240/- in two months and the others on an average Rs. 525/- in two months;

(b) if so, the number of districts covered under the Calcutta Telephone Exchange where the consumers are to pay a rental charge of Rs. 525/- in two months;

(c) whether the consumers under the Calcutta Telephone Exchange are being discriminated against vis-a-vis West Bengal circle;

(d) whether the Government propose to review their decision to remove the discrimination in payment of the rental charges; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) As per the prevailing tariff structure, rental depends upon the equipped capacity of the concerned Short Distance Charging Area (SDCA)/Telephone Exchange System and the classification of the areas falling therein as urban or rural. The West Bengal Telecom Circle accordingly charges from its subscribers in different SDCAs rental from Rs. 100 to Rs. 360 per two months.

(b) and (c) There is no discrimination against the consumers of Calcutta Telephone Exchange system vis-a-vis those of the West Bengal Telecom Circle. Both charge rentals from their customers as per the tariff structure prescribed by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India for different equipped capacities in different (urban/rural) areas.

(d) and (e) Do not arise in view of the (b) and (c) above.

[Translation]

Reduction of Debt Burden on States

2221. SHRI RAM RAGHUNATH CHAUDHARY:
SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA:
COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have examined the suggestions received regarding reducing the burden of debts on the States and making the ratio of loan and grants to 50:50 instead of the present 70:30 ratio;

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

(c) whether the Union Government have chalked out any schemes to reduce the burden of debts on the states;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when these schemes are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) Yes Sir. As a part of the States' suggestion for a revision in the Gadgil Formula and in the subsequent discussions in the 49th meeting of the National Development Council (NDC) held on 1st September, 2001, several non special category States have inter-alia, proposed liberalizing the existing loan-grant ratio for Central Plan Assistance.

(b) The existing Grant: Loan ratio of Plan assistance to States is based on the Gadgil Formula as approved by the National Development Council (NDC) in December, 1991. Any change in the Formula requires the approval of the NDC. Moreover, a change in the existing ratio has implications on Centre's revenue and capital receipts and thereby on the Plan assistance to States. Hence, any decision on this subject would be based on the overall resource position of the Centre and the decision of the NDC in this regard.

(c) to (e) Yes Sir. As a follow-up of the recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission (EFC), Ministry of Finance has drawn up a scheme of Medium Term Fiscal Reform Plan (MTFRP) (2000-01 to 2004-05) for the States which, inter-alia, aims at restoring their financial health and thereby a reduction in their debt burden.

[English]

Deputation of Government Officials/Officers

2222. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of Government officials/officers are being posted on deputation in Indian Embassies/High Commissions;

(b) if so, the details of officials/officers posted on deputation in various Embassies/High Commissions during the last two years; and

(c) the details of IFS, IPS, IAS and other service officers posted abroad and the criteria adopted for their selection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA): (a) to (c) Indian Missions/Posts abroad are primarily staffed by officials belonging to IFS (A) and IFS (B) cadres of the Ministry of External Affairs. Officials belonging to other Ministries and Departments of the Government of India are posted on deputation to certain specialized posts in Indian Missions/Posts abroad. These posts are specialized scientific, technical and commercial posts. The deputation of officials to Indian Embassies/High Commissions is determined by functional and operational requirements of the Government.

An illustrative list of officers posted on deputation in various Indian Missions/Posts abroad is enclosed as statement. The criteria for selection of officers against these posts are formulated by the nodal Ministry/Department in consultation with the Department of Personnel and Training and the Ministry of External Affairs, based on the functional and operational requirements of the posts.

Statement

S.No.	Name & Designation (S/Shri)	Mission	Date of Joining	Ministry under whose control the post is operated (Service)
1	2	3	4	5
1.	K.M. Chandrashekhar, Permanent Representative to WTO	PMI, Geneva	13.12.2001	Ministry of Commerce (IAS)
2.	Rajesh Aggarwal, Counsellor (WTO)	PMI, Geneva	27.11.2000	Ministry of Commerce (IAS)

1	2	3	4	5
3.	Ms. Alka Bhatia, First Secretary (WTO)	PMI, Geneva	07.06.2002	Ministry of Commerce (ITS)
4.	M.K. Rao, First Secretary (Legal)	PMI, Geneva	08.07.1999	Ministry of Commerce (Legal Officer)
5.	Smt. Neelam D. Sabharwal, Ambassador/Permanent Representative	PDI to UNESCO, Paris	28.02.2000	Ministry of Human Resource Development (IFS)
6.	R.S. Deshpande, Counsellor (AE)	E/I, Vienna	20.12.2000	Department of Atomic Energy (Scientist)
7.	R.P. Agrawal, Deputy Chief of Mission	E/I, Brussels	17.01.2002	Ministry of Commerce (IAS)
8.	R.R. Rashmi, Advisor ((I&E)	E/I, Brussels	27.08.2001	Ministry of Commerce (IAS)
9.	Siddharth, Advisor (A&MP)	E/I, Brussels	18.11.2002	Ministry of Commerce (IAS)
10.	A.K. Singhal, Deputy Railway Advisor	E/I, Paris	10.10.2002	Ministry of Railways (IRS)
11.	D.P. Dedhiya, Counsellor (Science)	E/I, Paris	02.09.2002	Department of Atomic Energy (Scientist)
12.	G. Narayanan, First Secretary (Space)	E/I, Paris	12.02.2001	Department of Space (Scientist)
13.	V.K. Raina, Railway Advisor	E/I, Berlin	27.08.2001	Ministry of Railways (IRS)
14.	A. Chakraborty, Counsellor (S&T)	E/I, Berlin	17.01.2000	Department of Science & Technology (Scientist)
15.	Govindan Nair, Minister (Agriculture)	E/I, Rome	14.01.2002	Ministry of Agriculture (IAS)
16.	Dr. U.S. Tandon, Counsellor (S&T)	E/I, Tokyo	26.08.1999	Department of Science & Technology (Scientist)
17.	S. Sundareshan, Minister (E&C)	E/I, Tokyo	23.08.1999	Ministry of Finance (IAS)
18.	J.K. Dadoo, Counsellor (Coord)	E/I, Moscow	17.10.2000	Ministry of Defence (IAS)
19.	H.M. Saxena, Counsellor (S&T)	E/I, Moscow	23.09.1999	Department of Science & Technology (Scientist)

1	2	3	4	5
20.	S. Saha, First Secretary (NPCIL)	E/I, Moscow	04.05.2001	Department of Atomic Energy (Scientist)
21.	C. Phunsog, Minister (Economic)	HCI, London	25.11.2002	Ministry of Commerce (IAS)
22.	Yogesh Khanna, Minister (Economic)	E/I, Washington	27.11.2000	Ministry of Finance (IAS)
23.	Alok Sheel, Counsellor (Economic)	E/I, Washington	31.0-8.2000	Ministry of Finance (IAS)
24.	Dalject Singh, Counsellor (Science)	E/I, Washington	26.07.1999	Department of Science & Technology (Scientist)
25.	A.K. Checker, Counsellor (DT)	E/I, Washington	01.12.1998	Department of Science & Technology (Scientist)
26.	R.S. Bhatia, Counsellor (ISRO)	E/I, Washington	21.05.2001	Department of Science & Technology (Scientist)
27.	Sudhir Kumar, Third Secretary (Economic)	E/I, Washington	14.10.1999	Ministry of Finance (CSS)
28.	R.N. Panda, Consul (Education)	CGI, New York	21.06.2002	Ministry of Human Resource Development (CSS)
29.	Dr. Mousami Swami, Second Secretary (Medical Officer)	E/I, Kathmandu	24.03.2000	Ministry of External Affairs (Assam Rifles)
30.	Dr. M.A. Qureshi, Second Secretary (Medical Officer)	HCI, Islamabad	02.02.2001	Ministry of External Affairs (Lok Nayak Jai Prakash Hospital, New Delhi)

Disinvestment of Refineries

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

2223. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA:
SHRI J.S. BRAR:
SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN:

Will the Minister of DISINVESTMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided not to include proposed new refineries at Bhatinda and Bina in HPCL and BPCL selling; and

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF DISINVESTMENT (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE): (a) and (b) Government's commitment to the completion of Guru Gobind Singh Refineries Ltd., Bhatinda and Bharat Oman Refineries Ltd., Bina continues irrespective of the disinvestment process of HPCL and BPCL, respectively. In case the new managements do not commit themselves to completing these projects, Government will set up alternative structures to ensure completion of the refineries.

FDI in Telecom Sector

2224. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE:
SHRI P.R. KHUNTE:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) the current status of FDI in Telecom sector;
- (b) whether the recent phase of acquisitions and mergers has given way to growth of MNCs in India;
- (c) if so, steps being taken by the Government to protect the Indian PSUs like BSNL & MTNL;
- (d) whether the Government propose to start single license regime; and
- (e) if so, whether the Government have started the consultation process with TRAI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Total foreign direct investment (FDI) in telecom sector till December 2002 has been Rs. 9562.10 Crores.

- (b) No, Sir.
- (c) Does not arise in view of (b) above.
- (d) There is no such proposal.
- (e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

[Translation]

Economic Package to Newly Created States

2225. DR. MAHENDRA SINGH PAL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government propose to provide economic package to the newly created Uttaranchal State;
- (b) if so, the assistance provided by the Union Government after the State has been awarded the Status of special State;
- (c) the financial assistance provided to the three newly created States by the Union Government so far; and
- (d) the assistance likely to be provided by the Union Government to the three new States for the establishment of their permanent capital?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Funds released to the three newly created States by Ministry of Finance during 2001-2002 excluding releases under the Calamity Relief Fund and National Calamity Contingency Fund are as under:

(Rs. in lakh)

Name of States	Total Amount Released
Chhattisgarh	44282.24
Jharkhand	43816.00
Uttaranchal	114854.49

(d) The assistance likely to be provided to the three newly created States for the establishment of their permanent capital would be Rs. 10 crore per year for next five years for every State subject to the submission of concrete proposals and a yearly review of the progress made.

[English]

Agreement with Iran

2226. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL:
SHRI A.P. JITHENDER REDDY:

Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India and Iran have signed an agreement for shipment of goods between Mumbai Port and Iranian Ports;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the extent to which it would provide better and cost effective means of transportation and increased movement of cargo from Mumbai?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI): (a) No, Sir. However, an inter-governmental agreement on International 'North South' Transport Corridor amongst the Government of Republic of India, Islamic Republic of Iran and Russian Federation was signed on 12th Sept.,

2000 which came into effect on 21st May, 2002. The North-South Transport Corridor is a new Multi-modal transport route linking India and Russia via Iran. The route connects the Mumbai Port on the West coast of India with the Iranian hub port of Bandar Abbas through sea transport.

(b) The provisions of this Agreement will regulate International Transport and transit of goods and passengers through the national territories of the parties to this agreement carried out by all modes of transport or through combined transport along the routes determined by the Competent Authorities of the respective parties. In case of India, the scope of the Agreement is limited to transportation of goods by sea route only.

(c) The new Multi-modal route with Iran acting as a transit link is considerably shorter than the traditional routes connecting India and Russia. It is estimated that this new link will help reduce the trade delivery time between India and Russia by around 10-12 days compared to the routes through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal, which take around 35 days. It would also reduce operational costs by around 20%.

Telephone Connections in West Bengal

2227 SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the latest position of providing connection from 'out of turn' Quota of Durgapur and Bankura district in West Bengal for the year 2002-2003;

(b) whether the serials are not maintained in case of priority bases for connecting telephone lines to the consumers of Barjora in Bankura district and Durgapur;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether Saharjora, Krishnanagar and other villages of Barojra P.S. Bankura district of West Bengal have been provided telephone connections;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) by when all applicants would be provided telephones in the said districts of West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) Sir, all the telephone connections sanctioned under out of turn quota for provision in Durgapur Telecom Division have been

provided. Five applications are pending in Bankura Telecom District.

(b) and (c) Sir, the connections are provided as per serial number in the waiting list skipping over the cases which are technically non-feasible.

(d) to (f) Barjora PS has 315 villages. The registered demand for telephones exist for 50 villages. Out of these 50 villages 35 villages including Saharjora and Krishnanagar have been provided with telephone connections. The remaining 15 villages are planned to be provided telephone connections by 31.3.04.

Regulations for Interconnections Regime

2228. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Telecom crisis which took place during January 2003;

(b) whether the Government have reverted to TRAI to make regulations for the Interconnections Regime urgently;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government propose to provide more powers to TRAI to enforce the said regulations more effectively; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) The private Cellular Mobile Telephone Service operators had disconnected/refused connectivity for the calls originating from Wireless in Local Loop based limited mobility (WLL-M) Basic Telephone Service subscribers, which were being transited to them through the networks of Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd./Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd. For some period in Delhi, completion of calls from the networks of two basic telephone service operators to the networks of some of the cellular operators was also affected. TRAI issued directive asking the Cellular operators to ensue completion of calls originated by WLL (M) subscribers for termination in cellular networks and also to ensure that consumers of both the networks do not face any inconvenience. Since the cellular operators did not comply with the said directive within the time allowed, and blocking of calls by cellular operators was in contravention of their licence terms and conditions, a show cause notice was issued

to the cellular operators. The interconnections between the Basic Telephone Service and cellular service networks have been reported to be restored.

(b) and (c) Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) indicated on 14.1.2003 that the Authority is engaged in the process of determining Interconnect Usage Charges (IUC). Accordingly, TRAI has issued on 24.1.2003 the Telecommunication Interconnection Usage Charge (IUC) Regulation 2003 revising the existing arrangements amongst service providers for sharing their revenue derived from providing telecommunication services from 1.4.2003.

(d) No, Sir.

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

Development of Infrastructure in North-Eastern Region

2229. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special provision has been made for developing Road and Railways in the North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Paper and Pulp Industry in Nagaland will be revived soon by the North-Eastern development Fund;

(d) if so, by when; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT OF NORTH EASTERN REGION (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways for development of National Highways and Ministry of Railways for development of Railways are required to earmark at least 10% of their Plan allocation for the North Eastern Regions. Likewise all the other Central Government Ministries/Departments (except those specifically exempted) are to earmark at least 10% of their Central Plan allocation for developmental programmes in North East. The unspent balance of the earmarked funds is pooled in to the Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources (NLCPR). The broad objective of the Non-lapsable Central Pool of Resources scheme is to ensure the speedy development of infrastructure in the Region including roads and railways. In addition, North Eastern Council also provides funds inter alia for road development in North Eastern Region.

(c) to (e) The only Central Government Paper & Pulp Industry in the State of Nagaland is Nagaland Pulp & Paper Company Limited, a subsidiary of Hindustan Paper Corporation Ltd., under the administrative control of Department of Heavy Industries. Its operations are suspended since October, 1992. Board for Industrial & Financial Restructuring (BIFR) has issued its winding up order on 4th March, 2002. Government of Nagaland and Nagaland Pulp & Paper Company Limited have filed an appeal before Appellate Authority on Industrial & Financial Restructuring (AAIFR) against the order of BIFR. In it's hearing on 14.11.2002, AAIFR granted an extension of three months time and has fixed the next date of hearing on 28.02.2003. The case was adjourned on this date.

[Translation]

Special Status to Rajasthan

2230. SHRI JASWANT SINGH BISHNOI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to give special status to Rajasthan;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to provide special assistance to desert and border districts of Rajasthan on the lines of Assistance provided to hilly districts of the country;

(c) if so, by when such an assistance is likely to be provided; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) In addition to the regular allocations being made to the State of Rajasthan for the ongoing Area Development Programmes (Desert Development Programme, Drought Prone Area Programme and Integrated Wasteland Development Programme), Planning Commission has allocated Rs. 50 crore in the Annual Plan 2003-04 of the Department of Land Resources, Ministry of Rural Development, for a special programme aimed at drought proofing of the desert districts of Rajasthan. This programme envisages development of at least one large pasturage nursery in each of the identified districts, as a Central scheme, for restoration of traditional water courses and other measures so as to ensure effective drought proofing.

In addition to the above-mentioned programmes, Special Central Assistance under the Border Area Development Programme is also being provided to Rajasthan for the blocks having international border.

[English]

Accidents on National Highways

2231. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether more than 80% of the road accidents are because of the fault of driver of Motor Vehicles;

(b) if so, the steps taken to check such accidents on National Highways;

(c) whether the Government propose to provide free insurance cover to passengers travelling on National Highways; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Some of the important steps being taken by the Government besides highway design to check the road accidents in the country are as under:

- (1) Assistance for setting up of Driving Training Schools.
- (2) Provision of refresher training to drivers of heavy motor vehicles.
- (3) Publicity campaign on road safety awareness through audio-visual-print media.
- (4) Grants-in-aid to voluntary organizations for administering road safety programmes.
- (5) Encouraging use of simulators in driver's training.
- (6) Institution of National Award for voluntary organizations/individuals for outstanding work in the field of road safety.
- (7) Organising All India Essay Competition on road safety for school children with a view to create awareness.
- (8) Tightening of fitness norms for transport vehicles.
- (9) Widening/improvement of roads. etc.

(c) and (d) All motor vehicles travelling on public roads are required to have insurance. As such insurance cover is already available to passengers travelling on National Highways.

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a statement (Hindi and English versions) correcting the statement made during the course of debate on Calling Attention in Lok Sabha on 20.2.2003 relating to the detection of harmful pesticides residues in certified bottled drinking water.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 7082/2003]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS [MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B.C. KHANDURI]: Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 10 of the National Highways Act, 1956:—
 - (i) S.O. 44(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 15th January, 2003 regarding acquisition of land for building, maintenance, management and operation of the National Highway No. 46 (Govindambadi to Perumugai) in the district of Vellore in the State of Tamil Nadu.
 - (ii) S.O. 69(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 24th January, 2003 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 426(E) dated the 15th April, 2002.
 - (iii) S.O. 70(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 24th January, 2003 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 238(E) dated the 27th February, 2002.
 - (iv) S.O. 72(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 24th January, 2003 regarding acquisition of land for laning on National Highway No. 46 (Krishnagiri-Ranipet

- Section) between Arapakkam to Veppur Village in the district of Vallore in the State of Tamil Nadu.
- (v) S.O. 85(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 24th January, 2003 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 524(E) dated the 17th May, 2002.
- (vi) S.O. 87(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 24th January, 2003 regarding acquisition of land for four laning on National Highway No. 2 (Palsit-Dankuni Section) in the district of Hooghly in the State of West Bengal.
- (vii) S.O. 88(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 24th January, 2003 regarding acquisition of land for four laning on National Highway No. 2 (Palsit-Dankuni Section) in the district of Burdwan in the State of West Bengal.
- (viii) S.O. 93(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 28th January, 2003 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 366(E) dated the 26th April, 2001.
- (ix) S.O. 1221(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 12th November, 2002 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 673(E) dated the 16th July, 2001.
- (x) S.O. 1253(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 2nd December, 2002 authorising Manager, NHAI, Project Implementation Unit, Dharwad, Karnataka as the Competent Authority to perform the functions of such authority under the said Act in respect of land stretch for widening of National Highway No. 4 in the State of Maharashtra.
- (xi) S.O. 1254(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 2nd December, 2002 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 265(E) dated the 28th February, 2002.
- (xii) S.O. 1255(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 2nd December, 2002 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 261(E) dated the 28th February, 2002.
- (xiii) S.O. 1256(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 2nd December, 2002 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 236(E) dated the 27th February, 2002.
- (xiv) S.O. 1264(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 4th December, 2002 declaring the land specified in the Schedule annexed to the Notification shall be acquired for widening and upgradation of National Highway No. 2 (Udaipur-Ratanpur Section) in the State of Rajasthan.
- (xv) S.O. 1265(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 4th December, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for building, maintenance, management and operation of National Highway No. 2 (Gorhar to Barwa-Adda) in the State of Jharkhand.
- (xvi) S.O. 1289(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 10th December, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for four laning of National Highway No. 46 (Kulithagai to Agaramcheri) in the District of Vellore in the State of Tamil Nadu.
- (xvii) S.O. 1290(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 10th December, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for building, maintenance, management and operation of National Highway No. 45 (Chengalpattu and Tindivanam) in the District of Villupuram in the State of Tamil Nadu.
- (xviii) S.O. 1304(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 11th December, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for four laning of National Highway No. 8 (Udaipur-Ratanpur Section) in the State of Rajasthan.
- (xix) S.O. 1313(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 13th December, 2002 regarding acquisition of land widening of National Highway No. 2 (Palsit-Dankuni Section) in the State of West Bengal.
- (xx) S.O. 1314(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 13th December, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for four laning of National Highway No. 2 (Panagarh to Palsit Section) in the State of West Bengal.
- (xxi) S.O. 1321(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 16th December, 2002 regarding acquisition of land for widening of National Highway No. 2 (Delhi-Kanpur Section and Kanpur-Varanasi Section) in the District of Kanpur Nagar in the State of Uttar Pradesh.

(xxii) S.O. 71(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 24th January, 2003 regarding acquisition of land for four laning of National Highway No. 46 (Krishnagiri-Ranipet Section) in the State of Tamil Nadu.

(xxiii) S.O. 86(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 24th January, 2003 regarding acquisition of land for four laning of National Highway No. 46 (Krishnagiri-Ranipet Section) in the State of Tamil Nadu.

(xxiv) S.O. 94(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 28th January, 2003 regarding acquisition of land for four laning of National Highway No. 4 (Chennai-Ranipet Section) in the State of Tamil Nadu.

(xxv) S.O. 120(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 3rd February, 2003 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 624(E) dated the 3rd July, 2001.

(xxvi) S.O. 121(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 3rd February, 2003 regarding acquisition of land for widening of National Highway No. 6 (Dhankuni to Kolaghat Section) in the State of West Bengal.

(xxvii) S.O. 122(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 3rd February, 2003 authorising Sub-Collector, Vijayawada, as the competent authority to acquire land for construction of toll plaza on National Highway No. 9 in the District Krishna in the State of Andhra Pradesh.

(xxviii) S.O. 141(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 7th February, 2003 making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O. 121(E) dated the 29th January, 2002.

(xxix) S.O. 152(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 11th February, 2003 regarding acquisition of land for construction of Highway No. 79 (Chittorgarh Bhilwara section) in the State of Rajasthan.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7083/2003]

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (ix to xxi) of item No. (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7084/2003]

(3) A copy of the Central Motor Vehicles (First Amendment) Rules, 2002 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 83(E) in Gazette of India dated the 5th February, 2003 under sub-section (4) of section 212 of the Motor Vehicles Act, 1988, together with an explanatory memorandum.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7085/2003]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Council of Homoeopathy, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Central Council of Homoeopathy, New Delhi, for the year 2000-2001.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7086/2003]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STATISTICS AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Department of Space for the year 2003-2004.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7087/2003]

(2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi, for the year 2000-2001, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Institute of Economic Growth, Delhi, for the year 2000-2001.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7088/2003]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING (SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSHUKHLAL GANDHI): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy of the Merchant Shipping (Management for the Safe Operation of Ships) Amendment Rules, 2002 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 388 in Gazette of India dated the 21st September, 2002 under sub-section (3) of section 458 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7089/2003]

- (2) A copy each of the following Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (2) of section 103 of the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963:—

- (a) (i) Annual Accounts of the Paradip Port Trust, Paradip, for the year 2001-2002 together with Audit Report thereon.
- (ii) Review by the Government on the Audited Accounts of the Paradip Port Trust, Paradip, for the year 2001-2002.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7090/2003]

- (b) (i) Annual Accounts of the Cochin Port Trust, Cochin, for the year 2001-2002 together with Audit Report thereon.
- (ii) Review by the Government on the Audited Accounts of the Cochin Port Trust, Cochin, for the year 2001-2002.

- (3) Two statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7091/2003]

- (4) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (4) of section 124 of the Major Port Trusts Act, 1963:—

- (i) G.S.R. 795(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 4th December, 2002 approving the Mumbai Port Trust Employees (Recruitment, Seniority and Promotion) Amendment Regulations, 2002.
- (ii) G.S.R. 796(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 4th December, 2002 approving the Cochin Port Trust Employees (Grant of Advances for Building of Houses) Amendment Regulations, 2002.

- (iii) G.S.R. 841(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 26th December, 2002 approving the Visakhapatnam Port Trust Employees (Grant of Advances for the Purpose of Conveyances) Amendment Regulations, 2002.

- (iv) G.S.R. 847(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 27th December, 2002 approving the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (Licensing and Control of Pilots) Amendment Regulations, 2002.

- (v) G.S.R. 64(E) published in Gazette of India dated the 27th January, 2003 approving the Visakhapatnam Port Trust Employees (GPF) Amendment Regulation 2003.

- (5) A copy of the Notification No. G.S.R. 846(E) (Hindi and English versions) published in Gazette of India dated the 27th December, 2002 containing corrigendum to the Notification No. G.S.R. 798(E) dated the 23rd October, 2001.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7092/2003]

- (6) (i) A copy of the Annual Administration Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Tuticorin Port Trust, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Tuticorin Port Trust, for the year 2001-2002.

- (iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government on the Audited Accounts of the Tuticorin Port Trust, for the year 2001-2002.

- (7) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (6) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7093/2003]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Department of Information Technology for the year 2003-2004.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 7094/2003]

12.02 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON ABSENCE OF MEMBERS
FROM THE SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE

Twelfth Report

[Translation]

SHRI RAM SAJIVAN (Banda): Sir, I beg to present the Twelfth Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Absence of Members from the sittings of the House.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we go to Calling Attention. Shri Sunil Khan.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, you had told that immediately after the question hour, the Government would make a statement regarding corruption charges levelled against Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: As I am speaking you please just listen. I have told that I will certainly take up question in 'Zero Hour' but you know that as per rules calling attention notice is taken up first and thereafter Zero Hour starts. Once Zero Hour starts, I shall take it up.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government had made a commitment to make a statement after question hour.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It will be made in Zero Hour.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Sir, you yourself told that the Minister of Home Affairs had to make a statement.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: That subject will come in Zero Hour.

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Sir, you said that you will take it up immediately after question hour.

MR. SPEAKER: I had not said this. Rather I had said that reply would be given in Zero Hour.

[English]

The Minister has also agreed to reply during 'Zero Hour'. When we start 'Zero Hour', I will give priority to this matter.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is very serious matter. ...(Interruptions)

12.04 hrs.

(I) **Re: Non-Availability of Medicines in CGHS
Dispensaries**

[English]

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Canara): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise an important issue. The CGHS strike has been going on for a long time now.

[Translation]

CGHS is not providing medicines and strike is going on. The same is the story this week also.

[English]

We are told to buy the medicines from outside and we are told that the amount would be reimbursed later.

[Translation]

We are facing a lot of problems.

[English]

I am requesting the Minister to do the needful in the matter. Since all of us are getting older, we need some medicines, but we are not getting them in CGHS Dispensaries these days.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: How has this question come in between? This will come later on.

...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: During the session days my blood pressure is up and they are not providing medicines. You just tell them to do something in this matter. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

Sir, I want a response from the Minister.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: I request that matter regarding corruption charges against the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh be taken before calling attention notice. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ramji Lal Suman, she is making a statement. If the Minister wants to make a statement at any time, I have to permit. Please take your seat.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Mr. Speaker, Sir, for me there is no need to ask for more facts from somewhere also, it is my own department. I want to apprise the Hon'ble Member and through you Sir, to whole House that the matter has been resolved through a meeting held day before yesterday. Wherever you go, you will not be told that medicine is not available. You can even visit a local chemist with your slip.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I was denied medicines yesterday itself.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: I told that orders have been issued yesterday evening. ...*(Interruptions)*

DR. GIRIJA VYAS (Udaipur): As far as I know no such orders had been issued till yesterday. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, orders have been issued yesterday evening. These will be effective from today onward. There is no paucity of medicines anywhere. This matter has been solved.

12.06 hrs.

(ii) Re : Reported Directive by Chief Minister of U.P. on Utilisation of MPLAD Funds

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Sushmaji, question is being raised here repeatedly about the statement of Ms. Mayawati. I

had told you that you could answer the question during Zero Hour.

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Mr. Speaker, Sir, on their insistence, if you order, I am giving the answer just now. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, Sushma Swarajji had told that the Minister of Home Affairs would give information about all facts. In this regard the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs had promised in the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Sir, yesterday, there was a commitment by Shrimati Shushma Swaraj in the House that she needed one day because Shri Advani wanted to make a statement today. Shri Advani wanted one day. ...*(Interruptions)* Today, if Shri Advani does not make a statement and there is again a substitute, it is wrong. ...*(Interruptions)* He has come.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Advani is here.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Minister of Home Affairs has come. I requested you that he should give statement before taking up the motion for calling attention.

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Mr. Speaker, Sir, had Sumanji waited for two minutes, I was about to tell that the Minister of Home Affairs is coming and he would give reply about it but he has made me a substitute by speaking before that.

MR. SPEAKER: He is in the habit of doing such things.

SHRI SHRICHAND KRIPLANI (Chittorgarh): Mr. Speaker, Sir, communal incidences are taking place in Rajasthan, one idol was broken even day before yesterday in Rajasthan. Such incidents are increasing in Rajasthan and Chittorgarh. Rajasthan Government has failed in dealing with communal incidents. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Zero Hour has not begun as yet. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have not taken anything on record.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I am not taking anything on record.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. The hon. Deputy Prime Minister in-charge of the Ministry of Home Affairs is here.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Kriplaniji, please be seated, the Minister of Home Affairs is speaking.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Minister of Home Affairs is here. I am asking him whether he wants to give a statement on the issue which is before the House, now or lateron.

[Translation]

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND IN-CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): Mr. Speaker, Sir, when this issue was raised here, you had directed me through the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs that I should gather information about it and inform the House about the same.

Thereafter, I contacted the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh and the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has written me a letter in this regard, I would say that it reflects her view.

Before, I give a statement or read out this reply, I would like to have your direction that in such a situation when this issue has been raised in the Legislative Assembly of Uttar Pradesh and in a way, the Legislative Assembly of Uttar Pradesh-

*Not recorded.

[English]

'is seized of the matter'

[Translation]

today, perhaps a non-confidence motion is also to be moved there, I don't have any further information about it. Would it be proper? The views expressed in it have the reference to that time when she was not the Chief Minister. It dates back to February, 2001, on the basis of which the view has been expressed. Secondly, the charges that have been levelled against the Samajwadi Party and its leaders in this letter. Would it be proper to say such things in Parliament and to level charges against one another? I, therefore, request that this issue should be raised in the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly where debate is going on and it should be kept confined to that place only. Sir, I spoke because it was your direction. ... (Interruptions)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Speaker, Sir, charges have been levelled against the Members of Parliament. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Members of Parliament have also been involved in it. ... (Interruptions) Sir, this issue is not confined to the Uttar Pradesh Legislative Assembly alone. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I do not like the way you are speaking at all you all please be seated. Why do you stand up? Please be seated. Only those Members will speak whom I have given permission. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This method of yours is not good. You think yourself an MP and do like this, what is this? ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The Home Minister has rightly raised a question in the House and he is absolutely right in raising it. The matter is in the UP Assembly and he has put a question to the House.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Why do you stand up like this in between? Please be seated.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Dasmunshiji, please be seated.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, the House must have the benefit to know the contents of the letter, which the hon. Home Minister has received. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: May I suggest one thing to you, Sir? I would send this letter to you. It is for you to decide whether on the basis of this letter the Government of India should make a statement because you should take a decision on that. I have no objection. You directed the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to get all the facts from the UP Governments and the UP Government has sent me this letter. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, the Home Minister has said that the Chief Minister of UP, after his intervention, sent him a letter. The House must have the benefit to know all the contents of the letter. What are the contents of the letter? ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: I have no objection. But it is for you to decide whether it is proper or not...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I request you that the reply sent by the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. ...*(Interruptions)* It is beyond imagination to expect from her that she will give correct information to the House and the Home Minister about facts. It is the question of prestige and dignity of Members of Parliaments because they too, have, been asked to contribute Rs. two lakhs for Mission from their M.Ps. fund ...*(Interruptions)*

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I can say that the reply sent by the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh ...*(Interruptions)* does not hold truth. The tape related to her is being telecast to all main channels of media. This Government is involved in extreme corruption. Whether the Government of India is considering a CBI enquiry into it? ...*(Interruptions)* I think it would be better if the Minister of Home Affairs tells us about the stand of the Government of India on it. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, it's not the matter of 2001 or whether she was the Chief Minister at that time or not ...*(Interruptions)* The main issue relates to her intention. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You please be seated.

SHRI RASHID ALVI (Amroha): Uttar Pradesh Government has undertaken enquiry. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Home Minister has told me that he wants to submit that letter to me. Let me go through the letter, then I will express my opinion.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, the letter must be placed on the Table of the House. I would like to know the contents of the letter. The House should have the privilege to know the contents of the letter, whether we agree or disagree will come later. But the text of the letter should be known to all the hon. Members of the House ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajanj, U.P.): Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have handed over the tape of entire incident. Hon'ble Prime Minister and Home Minister may please see the tape...*(Interruptions)* This allegation that the tape dates back to 2001 ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RASHID ALVI: It is not an allegation but a truth. Let him prove that the tape does not date back to 2001.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: I refute his allegations ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RASHID ALVI: The cassette dates back to 2001. Why did they keep themselves mum for two years? Why did they not go to the people? Why did they not take part in Assembly election held in meantime.

MR. SPEAKER: The Prime Minister wants to speak so you please sit down.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak because I, too, have a copy of her letter. After a perusal of this letter I have come to the conclusion that this letter should not go on record of this House. It would not be appropriate to demand every letter written to be laid on the Table ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Who asked to make a mention of the letter?

[English]

Sir, we did not insist the Home Minister to say this ...*(Interruptions)* We did not compel the Home Minister to say so ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let him complete his statement. How can you not allow the Prime Minister to make his statement?

[Translation]

Raghuvanshji, let him complete his statement.

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I request you to go thorough the letter and form your own opinion. Please do not go by my words. As many Members have not read the letter, they are insisting that it be laid on the Table. But I want to say that everything is not laid on the Table. Something are kept in mind as well.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Advaniji should have told this, why did you trouble yourself?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we shall take up the Calling Attention. Shri Sunil Khan ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: No, Sir we can not accept his comment ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: This issue, according to me for today is over.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAMUNSI: Sir, we do not know whether she has written a letter or not. The Home Minister has revealed this. We did not insist him to say so. ...*(Interruptions)* We did not compel the Home Minister to tell us whether the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh has written a latter to him or not. We did not compel him. We only wanted his statement. He could have avoided this. We did not ask him to reveal this. We know that the correspondence between the Union and the State is a matter of Privilege. We did not insist. The Home Minister has said so. Now, the Prime Minister can not blame us ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, Let me listen to Shri Chandra Shekharji. Sit down please.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Balua, U.P.): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I cannot help but to agree with the Prime

Minister after a long time. I think whatever is happening in Uttar Pradesh is shameful for the entire country. It is better not to repeat that shameful situation in this House. So far as Hon'ble Home Minister is concerned, I asked him to make a statement. He has provided all information he has. He said that he had received a letter from the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh but he did not read the letter as good sense prevailed upon him and I want to congratulate him for that. Please go through the letter, but I think that whatever is in the letter, will not add to the dignity of the Parliament. Therefore, I would like to ask my brother and friend Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi not to insist that the letter be laid on the Table of House. If Hon'ble Home Minister wants to make statement on his own he may go ahead if he does not want to make a statement today, he can do so tomorrow. But whatever is happening in Uttar Pradesh, is deteriorating the situation day-by-day. The situation is grave that might even lead to a civil war. Therefore, the Government of India should pay attention to it ...*(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, please listen to me for a minute.

MR. SPEAKER: The Prime Minister has already given reply. How many times will you speak? You have already spoken on this issue ten times, now sit down please. Please speak in one sentence.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to bring it in your knowledge that in the letter Mayawatiji is demanding commission even from a person who has been elected Member of Parliament from her Parliamentary constituency. Despite all this it is being stated that the tape is another one. Mayawatiji, after tendering resignation. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Sunil Khan, would you please start speaking?

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the person who has been elected member of Parliament in place of Ms. Mayawati ...*(Interruptions)* in the tape Ms. Mayawati is demanding money even from MPLAD Fund. ...*(Interruptions)* Please see the tape ...*(Interruptions)* That tape is urgent ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, you give your order after going through the letter ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please take your seats.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record now.

...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: I request all of you to finally see the tapc ...*(Interruptions)* Mr submission is only this that such act has go against the dignity of Members of Parliament ...*(Interruptions)* Members of Parliament have been stigmatized ...*(Interruptions)* Hon'ble Prime Minister, Chandra Shekharji and Priya Ranjan Dasmunsiji and others may please sit and see the tape. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Akhilesh ji, you do not fulfill your commitment. You had said that you would speak in one sentence. This is not one sentence.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I agree with the observation made by hon. Shri Chandra Shekhar but I would like to say that correspondence between a State and the Union Government is of a nature of confidence and privilege. The responsible Deputy Prime Minister should not at all have said in the House whether Kumari Mayawati had written a letter to him or not. If at all it were a sensitive letter, he should have restrained himself. As a responsible Deputy Prime Minister, he should not have said that.

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: I am sorry that Shri Priya Ranjan Damunsi should be persising with this ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAMUNSI: I am not persisting but you could have avoided that.

[Translation]

SHRI C.N. SINGH (Machhlishahar): Mr. Speaker, Sir, what does the honourable Minister of Home Affairs have to say about Mayawatiji's cassette? ...*(Interruptions)*

*Not recorded.

[English]

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: I am aware that ordinarily correspondence between a State and the Centre is not placed on the Table of the House. In this case, it was because of the directions of the hon. Speaker that the Government of India sought information from the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh. I personally spoke to her to ask what the matter was about.

This matter was raised in the House yesterday and the hon. Speaker had directed the Government to get necessary information. I personally spoke to her and she then wrote a letter to me immediately that these were the facts. After reading that letter, I felt that this is not a matter on the basis of which I should make a statement in the House. Therefore, I referred to it. I did it under your directions. After reading that letter, I have come to the conclusion that a statement by the Government of India on the basis of this could not be made. If there are any doubts, I am willing to send this to you and it is for you to decide whether I should do it or not. You said that it should be placed on the Table of the House to which the hon. Prime Minister replied. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: You see the video Cassette also ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we need your protection ...*(Interruptions)* Please go through the letter and give order thereafter ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI L.K. ADVANI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I believe that hon'ble Chief Minister would not have any objection if this letter is laid on the Table here ...*(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajanj, U.P.): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the speech of Ms. Mayawatiji should be deleted from Tehalka.com. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI): Sir, with your permission, I make the following statement.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is going on record except the statement of the Minister.

...(Interruptions)

12.24 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

**Reported continuous erosion of banks of Ganga
causing threat to hundreds of villages in Bengal**

[English]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): Sir, I call the attention of the hon. Minister of Water Resources to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The situation arising out of continuous erosion of banks of Ganga thereby causing threat to hundreds of villages in the districts of Murshidabad, Malda and North Bengal and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto." ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing should go on record except the Minister's statement.

...*(Interruptions)**

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI): The river Ganga enters West Bengal into the Malda district from Rajmahal in Bihar and flows to Bangladesh near Jallangi Bazar in Murshidabad district, West Bengal. In between, the Farakka Barrage has been constructed dividing the total stretch of 157 kilometres of the Ganga-Padma river into two parts-(i) 55 kilometres at the upstream of the Barrage in Malda district, and (ii) 102 kilometres at the downstream of the Barrage in Murshidabad district. Heavy erosion along the left bank of river Ganga in Malda district and along the right bank of Murshidabad district of West Bengal has been occurring due to the meandering nature of the river Ganga and has been active in different reaches at different periods of time depending upon the changing morphology of the river from time to time ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to take one minute.

MR. SPEAKER: Kunwar Akhilesh Singh, I cannot permit you to speak ten times. This is not good.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI C.N. SINGH (Machhlishahar): There is Video Cassette.

MR. SPEAKER: This is your cassette, send it to them.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please listen to the hon. Minister. It is a very important matter concerning lakhs of people.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Sir, it is a matter which should be very seriously considered as to how far State matters should come here. I have been, in my humble capacity, raising this question. We in our own agony bring in State matters with which the Centre is not concerned. If there is any matter within the competence of the Central Government and the Parliament is involved, we should take a principled and sober stand on this. This cannot be just branded across the House. I am requesting all the hon. Members. Every party has its own views on this matter.

Sir, I think, you have to take that initiative in this matter so that many matters which can be avoided should not be brought here. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Flood Management including river erosion being a State subject, investigation, planning and implementation of flood management schemes are within the purview of the respective State Governments. The Centre renders assistance that is technical, catalytical and promotional in nature.

The Ganga Flood Control Commission constituted by the Central Government in 1972 had prepared comprehensive plans for flood management for all the 23 river systems of Ganga basin of which West Bengal is also a part. These reports/plans have been forwarded to the State Government for implementation of the recommendations made therein.

In 1996, the Planning Commission had constituted an Expert Committee (namely Keskar Committee) which had suggested various short term as well as long term measures to be taken by the State Government as well as Farakka Barrage Project Authority (FBPA). At the request of the Government of West Bengal, the Planning Commission had sanctioned, as a special case, additional funds of Rs. 30 crore to the State under the State Plan funds to enable the State to take up top priority schemes

[Shri Arjun Charan Sethi]

during the financial year 1998-99. The Farakka Barrage Project authorities have also incurred an expenditure of Rs. 10.4 crore on anti-erosion works both in upstream and downstream of Farakka Barrage.

In connection with the erosion problem on the left bank of Ganga on the upstream of barrage near Panchanandpur, the Central Water and Power Research Station, Pune had submitted a report based on the Satellite Imageries indicating development of a new channel on the right bank downstream of Rajmahal which could develop in the coming years, thereby reducing the attack on the left bank. The above behaviour of the river is to be further studied by carrying out model studies through the CWPRS in association with the State Government.

Sir, with a view to provide financial assistance to the Ganga basin States of Uttar Pradesh (including Uttranchal), Bihar and West Bengal and Farakka Barrage Project Authority for implementing critical anti-erosion schemes, a Centrally Sponsored Scheme was approved by the Government of India in January, 2001 with a total Central share of Rs. 110 crore. The scheme is on the basis of 75:25 for Central : State share. Against the Central share of Rs. 30 crore, an amount of Rs. 17.88 crore was released to the Government of West Bengal during 9th Plan. A further amount of Rs. 4.27 crore has also been released to West Bengal in January 2003. Further release of funds will depend upon the submission of requisite progress reports/utilization certificates by the State Government.

Sir, I am glad to inform the House that the above scheme for providing Central assistance to the Ganga basin States for taking up critical anti-erosion works is also being continued during the Tenth Five-Year Plan for which an outlay of Rs. 133 crore has been kept. My Ministry has constituted an Expert Committee which includes representatives from the concerned State Governments including West Bengal to review the recommendations of the earlier Committees including that of Keskar Committee and come up with its recommendation for tackling erosion problem in the Ganga basin States. The State Governments have been asked to submit the prioritised schemes to the above Committee for inclusion in the Centrally Sponsored Scheme during the Tenth Plan.

Sir, my Ministry has also initiated steps for constitution of an Empowered Authority under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources with representatives from Ministry of Shipping, Ministry of Road

Transport and Highways, Ministry of Power, Railway Board, Inland Waterways Authority of India, Government of West Bengal and Calcutta Port Trust, to guide and oversee the operation and maintenance of the Farakka Barrage *inter alia* also to address the concerns on erosion problems upstream and downstream of the Barrage.

SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister has stated these things before the House. But the hon. Minister of Finance has already cut down the allocation to Rs. 16 crore from the previous year's Budget when he allocated hardly Rs. 20 crore. For the last 25 years the Government of West Bengal sought the Central assistance to combat the dangerous situation which cropped up due to erosion of land at the banks of Padma and Ganga rivers. Several villages have gone down into the riverbed. At certain areas the distance between Padma and Ganga rivers is less than one kilometre. The future of the Farakka Barrage has become uncertain.

The Government of West Bengal is demanding Central assistance for the last 25 years to combat the situation. The Chief Minister of West Bengal wrote a number of letters to the Union Government. An All-Party delegation met the Government at New Delhi and the present Chief Minister personally apprised the hon. Prime Minister of India about the gravity of the situation. But everything went unheard.

Hon. Member Shri H.D. Deve Gowda had personally surveyed the sites during his incumbency as Prime Minister of India and he called it as a national disaster and formed a Committee to tackle it. The Committee submitted an action plan of Rs. 900 crore. But after the exist of the Deve Gowda Government, the Central Government took no interest. It is a situation like the earthquake-hit Gujarat. It is impossible for the State Government alone to combat this disastrous situation spread over several districts.

I, therefore, demand that the disaster should be categorised and declared as a national disaster. Secondly, an interim fund of at least Rs. 200 crore should be sanctioned as Central assistance to the Government of West Bengal. Thirdly, a High-Powered Committee may be constituted, though already constituted earlier, with the representatives of both Central and State Governments to finalise the action plan. Fourthly, the Central assistance is to be given to the Government of West Bengal to tackle the national disaster. In addition to that I would highlight the erosion in Damodar river also as a result of which some parts of the districts Bankura, Burdwan, Hooghly and Howrah were already submerged. I would also request you to bredge the silt and sand at the point of Damodar river at the barrage of Durgapur. We have

already witnessed an unprecedented flood situation in the years 1978 and 1995. The situation has to be tackled now, I would again urge upon the Union Government to please sanction the money of at least Rs. 200 crore immediately.

Lastly, I submit that if we fail to do that, deadly silence will be there; every village will be lost, every dwelling will be a past and a cry of anguish will cover the sky, but no one will be there.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Moinul Hasan. May I make it clear to you, Shri Hasan that only clarificatory questions can be asked and no speech can be given. You just ask questions to the Minister.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN (Murshidabad): Yes, Sir, I will ask some questions. I request you to permit me to speak for three to four minutes.

Sir, it is such a problem which is happening in my constituency, in my district and in my State. For the last two or three decades, the erosion of the Ganga River banks is a serious problem in West Bengal. Earlier, it was in a particular area of Murshidabad, Malda and Noida. Now, it has spread to other parts of the State, in seven or eight districts of Murshidabad at different parts of different rivers such as Hoogly, Ichhamati, Subarnarekha and Bhagirathi. In the statement, the Minister has already stated that heavy erosion has taken place and lakh of people have been evicted from their residences and lakhs of hectares of cultivable land and orchard mangroves are engulfed by the erosion. Also, school building, hospital and administrative building are lost due to erosion. It is such a situation which is just like a national calamity.

In this regard, my first question is: What is the attitude of the Government towards declaring the situation a national problem? Secondly, erosion is threatening national highway, power sector at Bandel, railway at Samudragarh and Shakopada in Eastern Railway. My question is: Has any comprehensive interaction started or not? Then, the hon. Minister has stated in his statement that there is a high-powered committee. What are its Terms of Reference? Thirdly, A high-powered committee was established under the chairmanship of Shri Keskar at the time of former Prime Minister, Shri Deve Gowda. The Committee had submitted its Report also. My question is: Has the Government accepted the Report as it is or not, or has the Government accepted the Report partially? I am raising this question because in his reply, the hon. Minister has stated that they have set up another committee to review the recommendations of the Keskar Committee. This Keskar Committee only had given some

assurances on behalf of the Planning Commission to the people of West Bengal. They had proposed two terms—long-term and short-term—for doing it. It had required Rs. 927 crore to protect erosion and to take up the anti-erosion programme. If that Report of Keskar Committee is fully accepted, what action has the Government taken according to their recommendations?

Fourthly, the Government of India was in agreement with the State Government over expenditure sharing to face the problem. The ratio was 75:25. It is already mentioned in the statement of the Minister. May I ask whether till date, the Government of India is following this agreement or not? If they are following this agreement, how much funds are provided.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Adhir Chowdhary.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Sir, I am concluding.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay, you conclude.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: To start anti-erosion programme—the Minister knows it—for preparation of a project, the State Government was compelled to pass through a cumbersome process. The Minister looked after the matter to ease the process.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Adhir Chowdhary.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: I come to my next question. A mass agitation of people led by the Left Front took place in West Bengal.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Adhir Chowdhary, you start speaking. I have given him a very long time.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY (Berhampore, West Bengal): Sir, I will also pick up the thread from where he ends.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Sir, I am raising another question. Who will do the rehabilitation work of people?

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: What is the thinking of the Government of India about the rehabilitation of the evicted people? My last question is this. The Ministry of Water Resources is in a position to ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude now. Now, nothing should go on record. Shri Adhir Chowdhary.

...*(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: I am not taking on record anything what Shri Moinul Hassan is speaking now.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Moinul Hassan, please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Adhir Chowdhary, you can start now. I am not allowing whatever Shri Moinul Hassan is speaking hereafter to go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: At the outset, I must subscribe partially to the view expressed by my colleagues, who are supposed to be the praetorian guards in Parliament on behalf of the Left Front Government in West Bengal.

I must acknowledge that it is a matter of grave concern. However the entire responsibility is to be borne out by the Central Government is simply a fallacy being churned out by the State Government out to hoodwink the erosion-affected people and in order to provide a fig-leaf to conceal their dismal performance, it seems as if they shall be twiddling their thumbs while lakhs of people are rendered homeless and penniless. What I am saying is that on such a sensitive issue, we should not indulge ourselves in scoring any political brownie points.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that the erosion of such magnitude is hardly to be dealt with singly by a State Government. You are well aware that in 1978, the State Government of West Bengal constituted one Committee: the Preetam Singh Committee. Again, in 1996, under the guidance of the Planning Commission and under the stewardship of Keshkar, one Committee was constituted to recommend measures against the severe erosion along the banks of the *Ganga* and the *Padma*.

Under the Radcliff dispensation, the Indian Government conferred upon East Pakistan the Hindu-dominated 'Kusthia' District is swapping for the Muslim-dominated 'Murshidabad' District with an eye on constructing the Farakka Barrage Project. The reason is to cater to the need of preservation and maintenance of Kolkata Port and increase the water supply from upland at Farakka into the *Bhagirathi* River to reduce salinity and to ensure sweet water. The third was the strategic

rail and road link across the bridge of Farakka. It is the lifeline between Kolkata and North-Eastern India. The fourth is the navigational facilities on the *Bhagirathi* and the *Hooghly* rivers.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Adhir Chowdhary, will you please conclude now?

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: At one point, at a village named 'Fazilpur', the distance between the *Bhagirathi* and the *Padma* rivers has been reduced to a mere 1.2 kilometres, and the eroding gap between the two rivers

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude now.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: The hon. Minister has already started as to how much sum has been allotted to the Government, but may I ask the hon. Minister as to why the full amount has not been released so far? What was the lacuna on the part of the State Government of West Bengal? Second, I must urge upon the Central Government to explore a national plan so as to restrain the erosion.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Shri Lakshman Seth, you can start now.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Whatever Shri Adhir Chowdhary is saying hereafter will not be taken on record.

...(Interruptions)*

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (Tamluk): The situation is very much grave. If this situation is not tackled, it may lead to national cataclysm because of erosion. Heavy siltation is taking place in the river-bed, which is eroding the depth of the shipping channel. That is why, the Kolkata Port and the Haldia Port are facing dire consequences.

Big ships are facing impediments in entering the Port. This is a very important issue. Because of erosion, the catchment capacity of the rivers is reducing. That is why the amount of water flowing from the up-end is reducing and the tidal water from the sea is entering into the estuaries as well as various river like Rupnarayan, Ajoy, etc. As a result of this, the water is becoming much more saline. The saline water is entering into the subsoil also. Because of this, people living alongside the Ganges are facing a serious problem of non-availability of water for drinking and irrigation purposes.

Mere dumping of boulders cannot protect these embankments. If Ganga and Padma meet, the whole of South Bengal would be washed out. The whole area will come under water. A national cataclysm, a national catastrophe may take place. I request the hon. Minister to engage a very high-powered consultancy firm, which should have some knowledge and expertise in this matter and which should have worldwide fame, to study this matter.

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. How can you encroach upon other's time?

SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH: Only by dumping boulders, the embankments cannot be protected. Recently the University of Hamburg in Germany has suggested usage of certain type of geo fabric to protect these embankments well. I want to know from the Minister whether the Government is going to engage such an international consultant for undertaking the feasibility study. Otherwise, we will face a disaster. This is very much important. Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: The position about the Calling Attention Notice is clear that only those Members are allowed to speak whose names are on the list. But, since this is a very important matter, I have allowed two Members to put questions and they will only put questions. Whatever Shri Lakshman Seth says now will not go on record.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (Barrackpore): Sir, I may be allowed to speak in lieu of Shri Basu Deb Acharia.

MR. SPEAKER: In lieu of him, you will not be allowed to speak. But I will permit you to ask one question.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Sir, I am thankful to you for allowing this Calling Attention. I have been crying for this for the last one month.

We may recall that in the last Session of the House that hon. Minister gave the assurance that if schemes were sent to him he would look into them sincerely. On that assurance, I went back to my Constituency where not one, not two, not three, but 18 villages in Ratua Block at Mahantola, Bilaimari have been washed away in Phulwar and Ganges. I pacified the people saying that some justice will be done. I gave the Minister the schemes for Uttar Dinajpur District. Schemes of Malda are coming very shortly. I appeal to the hon. Minister that before the monsoon begins—in West Bengal it normally begins in the month of July—a team be sent to evaluate the schemes at least in Uttar Dinajpur and Malda

embankments of Ganges, Mahananda, Phulwar, River Sui and Nagar. I will be grateful to the hon. Minister, if necessary steps are taken.

Sir, I need your protection. Believe me, I will tell you the truth. For the last one and a half months I could not visit those segments because there are no people there. The villages are washed away. Those people are living in hutments now. Only this Calling Attention, based on the assurance, will ensure my passage to that area. Therefore, I appeal to the hon. Minister to kindly respond to this call and send the team quickly to the embankments both in Malda and Uttar Dinajpur so that some steps can be taken before the monsoon begins.

SARDAR SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN (Sangrur): Sir, Shri Dasmunsi is a great leader, a national leader of great magnitude. But, whenever he rises to speak on national matters, whether it is the Railway Budget or water issues, he confines his speech only to his constituency and some other Districts of West Bengal. Will you please ask him to speak about Punjab and the rest of the country also? Thank you, Sir.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I assure him that I will specially take care of Punjab and his constituency also.

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: You have to only ask questions. No one is allowed to go out of question.

[*English*]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly): Sir, please allow me also to ask a question ...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

MR. SPEAKER: Ask only question, otherwise I shall not permit others also to ask questions.

[*English*]

I am allowing some Members to ask questions as a special case, because the issue is very important. But Members should not take undue advantage of this goodness.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DHARM RAJ SINGH PATEL (Phulpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, in my Phulpur constituency the farmers of two to three villages Kakara, Kutwa and Lalapur are losing

[Shri Dharm Raj Singh Patel]

their cultivable land due to erosion by river Ganga. This erosion is endangering these villages now. I have raised the issue once or twice under rule 377 but no action has been taken by the government so far. I make a demand to the government to make some kind of arrangement for the safety of those villages.

[English]

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (Calcutta North West): Thank you, Sir. Though I am an MP from Calcutta, my birth place is Murshidabad. Therefore, naturally, I want to share my sentiments with the problem.

Sir, the hon. Minister has said that during the 10th Plan, Rs. 133 crore has been allotted for the whole Ganga basin area. My question is very specific. Would the hon. Minister consider setting up a master plan for protection of the erosion of the river Ganges, particularly in the zones of Murshidabad, Malda Nadia and North Bengal?

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Tarit Baran Topdar. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Please allow me also. It covers my constituency in a big way ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR: Sir, the explanation has been given by the hon. Minister. But whether it comes under the jurisdiction of the Central Government or the State Government. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Speaker, Sir, during Zero Hour the question regarding farmers is also very important. I have given notice of adjournment motion. So you are kindly requested to take care of that also.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You speak once your turn comes.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, I have been witness to millions and millions of people suffering for all these years.

MR. SPEAKER: I will permit you to ask one question. Now, please allow him to raise his question.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR: Sir, it is not clear whether it is under the jurisdiction of the Central Government or the State Government. What the hon. Minister had said is not clear. It is ambiguous. So, the Government should candidly declare as to whether they are going to implement the Kaskar Committee Report or not.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, I am one of those who have been witness to lakhs of people losing their livelihood and losing their agricultural land. There is a railway line near Behula. I do not know what is going to happen to the national highway, to the railway lines and to the power plants in Bengal.

Sir, it is a national problem. So, we have been seeking some assurance from the Government in this regard. At least Rs. 1,000 crore need to be just spent for this master plan over a period. The technology is available. In Bangladesh and in some other countries, this technology is being used successfully. This technology is cheaper for embankment, to stop erosion and in containment of erosion that is taking place.

The Minister of External Affairs is here.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question straight.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have told you that you should only ask the question. I have made it a special case.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, I am asking my question. What does the Government propose to do with regard to this serious and national problem? What is the amount going to be provided immediately to that the work can be started to save the livelihood of the people? Thank you.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the Government that there is heavy erosion going on by river Ganga in districts of Samastipur, Vaishali and Begusarai in Bihar. What is the proposal sent by State Government to you in this regard. What was the demand and how much you provided and how much is left over so that erosion can

be checked there. What steps have been taken by the Government to rehabilitate those people?

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the hon. Minister.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Sir, I am on a point of order.

There is an error in the Statement.

MR. SPEAKER: That you should have said in your speech.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: He has said that 'the river Ganga enters West Bengal into the Malda District from Rajmahal in Bihar and flows to Bangladesh near Jallangi bazar in Murshidabad district ...'(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I have not allowed your point of order.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Adhir Chowdhary, you have to state the rule under which you are asking your point of order.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, now the Hon. Minister.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Adhir Chowdhary, please sit down.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, with your permission, I would like to admit that the situation of bank erosion, especially in the Ganga basin States are serious; no doubt about it. For that purpose, many, Committees have been constituted; they have given their recommendations also.

As has been mentioned by the hon. Members, once Preetam Singh Committee had been constituted. Similarly, Keshkar Committee was also there. Another Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Shri G.N.

*Not recorded.

Murthy who was the Chairman of GFCC. Similarly, in the Ministry of Water Resources, I have also directed my officers to visit the spot and find out the critical areas. Critical areas have been identified indifferent parts of erosion sites and remedial steps have been taken to mitigate the sufferings.

As has been mentioned by hon. Members, during 1998-99, as per the recommendations of the Keshkar Committee, the Planning Commission has sanctioned Rs. 30 crore in favour of the State of West Bengal. As per the recommendations of the G.N. Murthy Committee who was the then Chairman of GFCC, the following allotment has been made; and I would like to point out here—as has been mentioned by my friends from West Bengal on critical erosion—four schemes have been taken up and the amount sanctioned was Rs. 30 crore. This is from the Ministry of Water Resources. We have released till date an amount of Rs. 22.15 crore. Another amount of Rs. 1.3 crore will be released very soon, in the month of March itself.

But I would like to point out that some problems lie with the State Governments. Money has been sanctioned, no doubt—as I have stated here, an amount of Rs. 22.15 crore, but if utilisation certificate do not come, we cannot release the rest.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: It has come right now.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Just now it has come. I have written letters to the hon. Minister of Water Resources, Government of West Bengal and then only it has come. Recently it has come. Accordingly, an amount of Rs. 1.3 crore will just be released very soon, in this month itself. ...'(Interruptions) Out of Rs. 30 crore, we have released Rs. 22.15 crore and another amount of Rs. 1.32 crore will be released very soon. The moment we get the utilisation certificate from the State Governments, the rest of the amount will be released in favour of those States.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: What about the master plan? It is the national plan.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: I am coming to that.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: May I know whether the State Government has produced any master plan to you or to the Planning Commission?

MR. SPEAKER: There will be many more such questions. But you can reply to whatever you want.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, secondly so far as U.P. is concerned, we have already sanctioned an amount of Rs. 16.33 crore. They will get another amount of Rs. 4.7 crore, the moment we get the utilisation certificate. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH (Pratapgarh): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to what the comments he made about U.P. I do not know where he spent the money. Just now, in the *kumbh mela* month, the water has become orange and nobody was able to take bath in the entire month because of pollution. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, I seek your protection.

Money will be released from the Central Government; and it is up to the State Government to utilise it. They have to utilise the funds made available to them. They have also to submit the utilisation certificate in time. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur): Mr. Minister, Sir, Hon'ble Speaker has permitted me to ask question from you.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, I would like to tell that Shri Shripakash Jaiswal has asked for permission, but I have not given it.

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL: Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, Mr. Minister is discussing about Uttar Pradesh. I would like to tell that bank erosion has been taking place slowly in Kanpur to Unnao side since last 30 years. Hundreds of villages have been submerged due to this erosion by Ganga.

13.00 hrs.

From this side devotees of Kanpur could not take bath in the river Ganga for 20 years. Government had announced somewhat 20 years ago to construct Ganga barrage. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I have not permitted him to speak, Mr. Minister, you please speak.

[English]

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, this matter, is not under my control. It is under the Ministry of Environment and Forests. ...*(Interruptions)* Generally whatever projects are submitted, they are submitted by the State Governments. We certainly examine the projects submitted by the State Governments and try to provide funds for their execution. We cannot make schemes on our own.

MR. SPEAKER: There are many important questions to be taken up. I cannot allow discussion like this.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down. Mr. Minister, you can conclude your reply.

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: This particular issue is related to bank erosion of Ganga river and not to any barrage or scheme or project. So, what can I do? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Like this, your reply will remain incomplete. I want you to complete your reply. You can just go ahead.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, if time and again interruptions are there, how could I complete the reply? ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Whatever you are saying, every word will go on record and nobody else's words will go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, as the situation is grave, this scheme will continue during the Tenth Five Year Plan. We have kept Rs. 133 crore to solve the problem of bank erosion in the Ganga basin States. We are providing funds for this project. As regards declaring this project as a national project, there is no scope of treating or declaring this project as a national project. So far as the Master Plan is concerned, certainly many schemes have been given. We are examining them. We will take a decision in consultation with the State Governments of these basin States.

With these words, I thank you.

*Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: The discussion on Calling Attention is over. Now, Shri Ramji Lal Suman would speak.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, he could call the hon. Members to his Chamber and discuss the matter. Sir, you can direct the Minister to do so. That would save the time of the House. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Sir, may I make a request? This is a serious matter. It is not a question of controversy. It should not be treated as a controversy between the Centre and the States. Everybody admits that this is a serious matter. The hon. Minister has also said this. It is also understood and accepted by everybody—the former Finance Minister is here and he would also agree—that one State Government cannot possibly tackle this serious issue which require nearly Rs. 1000 crore. Therefore, the Chief Minister of West Bengal has suggested that a Task Force containing the Central Government, concerned State Governments, and some experts should be constituted to monitor daily. It would find out what is the best way of doing it as also how best we could utilise funds.

This has been the request that has been made many times by the Chief Minister and even he made this request in his last letter to the hon. Minister. Therefore, our appeal to you is that this should be treated as a national issue. Huge tracts of land are being lost and people are losing their hearths and home. They do not have any place to go. There is the question of rehabilitation of these people. Therefore, this is a real national issue. Please treat this in this matter. There may be some faults here and there. I can point out something that the Centre has done or not done. Similarly, you also can point out something that the States have done or not done. But that will not help manner. As has been mentioned by Shri Dasmunsi, you can talk to the people there and the concerned Members of Parliament could help you out in this. This is a very serious national issue.

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Sir, my district has been the worst affected in the State of West Bengal. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am not going to start a debate on this.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI: Sir, I have stated in my statement that an Empowered Committee has been

constituted with representatives from all the concerned Ministries. In keeping with the suggestion of our senior leader, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, this Committee would go into the details of each scheme, each project and seek the opinion of all persons who are considered important and who could suggest and contribute for the implementation of the schemes and projects.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Why do you not call a meeting of the Members of Parliament whose constituency is affected badly? After that you can give the report to the concerned State Governments and then the Task Force can give their views. In that case we can do some concrete work on this. ...(Interruptions)

SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Hon. Minister you are well aware that the Ganga river. ...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Whatever Shri Adhir Chowdhary is speaking will not go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Sumanji, if you want to speak you are permitted.

[English]

SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH: Now, when you have this committee, you can call the Members of Parliament representing the constituencies in the Ganga Basin and ask them about the problem they are facing. Mr. Minister would you do that? ...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, after the presentation of the Budget by the Finance Minister the increase in the prices of Fertilizers and Diesel has brought out a strong reaction throughout the country. Farmers have faced problems. Mr. Speaker, Sir, we have been raising this issue of rolling back the prices of fertilizers and diesel for last few days. As per my assumption in the Parliamentary Democratic Governments of the world the Government of India is the only Government where every Minister of the Government is asking to rollback the hiked prices of fertilizers and diesel. Today, the statements of Hukum Narayan Yadav, Shri Ajit Singh and Sharad Yadavji have been published, this issue is not related to Party politics but it is a question

*Not recorded.

[Shri Hamji Lal Suman]

of helplessness and compulsions of the farmers. The alliance parties have asked for the rolling back of the prices of fertilizers and diesel. Yesterday, a meeting of Parliamentary Party of N.D.A. was held. In that meeting also the Members of Parliamentary belonging to Bhartiya Janta Party have asked for the rolling back of the prices but the Deputy Prime Minister instructed not to speak publicly and not to oppose this hike in prices. Through you, Sir I want to urge that it is a very serious matter, it is not a party based issue, it is a matter of entire nation. The farmers of the entire country have strongly reacted against it and if the prices of fertilizers and diesel are not rolled back there will be a strong reaction in the entire country. Farmers will be agitated, tension will prevail and a very serious situation will arise. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2 p.m.

13.09 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Fourteen of the Clock.

14.04 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at four minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now we shall take up Matters under rule 377. Shri Radha Mohan Singh.

[Translation]

(i) Need to set up Doordarshan and Akashvani centres at Motihari, Bihar

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH (Motihari): Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sir, Motihari in Bihar is a very ancient place to historical and religious importance. World's highest 'Bouddha Stupa' is situated in Kesaria. Motihari is the land of Sameshwar Dham the Ashram of Rishi Valmiki and the headquarters of the land of Chanakya, Champaran. It is the main city of Indo-Nepal border. There has been a demand for setting up of a Doordarshan and Akashvani centers there for the years. Besides Sitamarhi, Sivhar, Bagha, Raxaul the land of half the population of Nepal is near Motihari.

I request the Minister of Information and Broadcasting that a Doordarshan and Akashvani centre may be set up at Motihari to meet the demand of the people of this area in the interest of the people of this most backward area of Bihar and Nepal.

(ii) Need to set up forest based industries in Singhbhum Parliamentary constituency to generate employment for Adivasis

[Translation]

SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA (Singhbhum): Forest based raw material is available in large quantity in my parliamentary constituency Singhbhum and there is great potential for establishing forest based industries in this area. However, the Government has not paid any attention towards it. Until now thereby making the valuable wood and medicinal herbs go waste. A large number of tribals live in this area who migrate to other towns in search of employment. If forest based industries are set up in this region it will lead to production of forest based products at a lower cost and moreover it will check the migration of local tribals to other towns.

So, I request the Government through the Chair that initiative should be taken to set up forest based industries in my parliamentary constituency, Singhbhum and those industries should be encouraged.

(iii) Need to clear the proposal of the Government of Gujarat for setting up of a 'Fluoride Prevention Centre' in Gandhi Nagar

SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA (Dhandhuka): In view of increasing fluoride pollution in many parts of Gujarat, the State Government has requested the Central Ministry of Rural Development to set up a Fluoride Prevention Centre in Gandhi Nagar, which will work under Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission, an autonomous organization under the Government of India.

Even after repeated correspondence, the Gujarat Government has not got the sanction of Central Government for establishing the above mentioned centre so far. Through the Chair, I request the hon. Rural Development Minister to clear the proposal for setting up the above mentioned 'Fluoride Prevention Centre' in Gandhi Nagar.

(iv) Need to re-start air service to Jabalpur, Madhya Pradesh and connect it with Mumbai

SHRI RAM NARESH TRIPATHEE (Seoni): Air service for Jabalpur city in Madhya Pradesh has been stopped

which has adversely affected the trade and tourism in Mahakaushal region. I appeal to the Government of India that air service for this important city should be resumed, it should be connected to Mumbai and the air-fare should be at par with the fare for cities situated at same distance.

[English]

(v) Need to enhance custom duty on import of silk with a view to safeguard the interest of indigenous sericulture industry particularly in Karnataka

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Canara): Sir, sericulture is an agro-based industry providing gainful employment to the weaker sections in rural India. About 2.52 lakh sericulture farmers and 13,000 silk reelers in Karnataka are depending for their livelihood on this vocation.

Since September, 2001, the prices of cocoon and silk have started declining due to dumping of silk from China. The prices of cocoons and silk have fallen drastically. This has resulted in uprooting of mulberry gardens.

An all-Party delegation led by hon. Chief Minister of Karnataka submitted a memorandum to the hon. Prime Minister, hon. Union Textile Minister and hon. Union Finance Minister to consider the following:

- (1) To increase import duty under OGL from 35.03 per cent to 85 per cent.
- (2) Greater vigilance to stop smuggling/illegal entry of silk from border countries like Nepal and Bangladesh.
- (3) Release of Rs. 5.00 crore grant to Karnataka Silk Industries Corporation.
- (4) Imported silk to be restricted to the extent required for manufacture of export fibres.
- (5) To release Rs. 5.96 crore towards share of Central Silk Board for the incentive paid to the sericulture farmers at Rs. 10/- per kilogram of cocoons transacted in the Cocoon Markets of Karnataka from 16.9.2002 to 15.12.2002.

I request the Central Government to raise the custom tariff further to safeguard the sericulture industry in Karnataka and bring relief to the sericulture farmers.

(vi) Need to withdraw the move to shift Apparel Park from Kannur to Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (Badagara): In accordance with the Textile Policy of the Government of India declared

in 2000, Union Textile Ministry has decided to set up facilities for increasing exports in the major textile centres in the country. The Union Textile Ministry has identified 24 major export centres where Apparel Parks for Export Project are to be set up. Kannur is the only centre in the State of Kerala identified for the purpose. Now, it is reliably learnt that the Government of Kerala is making a move to shift the proposed centre from Kannur to Thiruvananthapuram. In this connection, I submit that the Textile Ministry identified the district of Kannur as the centre on the basis of textile exports from the district. Out of Rs. 328 crore of textile export from the State of Kerala, export worth Rs. 232 crore is from Kannur, and out of the 130 handloom exporters, 70 are from Kannur. So, there is no justification in the move to shift the centre from Kannur to Thiruvananthapuram. In this context, I appeal to the hon. Minister for Textile to give strict directions to the Government of Kerala not to shift the centre from Kannur to Thiruvananthapuram.

(vii) Need to set up a Coconut Research Centre at Silagam village, Andhra Pradesh

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam): There is a vast area of coconut plantation spread over 80 kms. in my Srikakulam Constituency besides East Godavari and West Godavari districts in Andhra Pradesh. The coconut farmers are suffering a lot on account of several coconut crop diseases for which remedies are not known to them. So, the quality of coconut is also dwindling and its size is also becoming small. The farmers silently watch the decay of their coconut produce. I requested earlier also to start a Central Coconut Research Centre at "Silagam Village", Kaviti Mandal, Srikakulam in Andhra Pradesh to research and eradicate the problems of coconut farmers with suitable pesticides. Such Research Centre can also develop formulate for better quality yields of coconut by undertaking soil testing of the area. I understand that Government of India have already acquired land for the purpose.

I, therefore, once again appeal to Government of India that the Central Coconut Research Centre may be started at Silagam village immediately to encourage and propagate coconut business and boost its export.

[Translation]

(viii) Need to release funds for proper maintenance of National Highway No. 93 between Agra and Allgarh via Khandauli, Sadabad and Hathras, U.P.

PROF. S.P. SINGH BAGHEL (Jalesar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Government of India has declared Agra-

[Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel]

Aligarh highway via Khandauli, Sadabad and Hathras as National Highway No. 93. Though much time has passed since the declaration as national highway, yet no work has been undertaken by National Highway Authority to improve it to the level of National Highway. The road is in a dilapidated state upto 6 kms. beginning from Ram Bagh Chauraha to Terhi Bagia on N.H. 93. In Khandauli section there is Kharanja on National Highway. Condition of the road is worst in Hathras town. The Union Minister of Surface Transport is requested to immediately make available funds for widening of the above-mentioned National Highway No. 93. The road should be constructed by using hot mix plant, mixture and also construct cemented drainage canals along side the road. In first phase work should be done from Agra to Sadabad particularly upto Terhi Baghia and the work should be started from Agra because starting the work in between is not justified.

[English]

(ix) Need for construction of a railway station near Thathankuppam village between Korattur and Villivakkam, Tamil Nadu

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (Madras North): North Chennai Suburb is fast developing and the number of daily commuters is also increasing. EMU trains running from Chennai Central towards North are passing through Villivakkam and Korattur. There is a strong demand for construction of a railway station and stoppage of EMU trains in-between Villivakkam and Korattur, near Thathankuppam village. It is surrounded by fast-developing areas like Teachers Colony, Kolathur, Lakshmiapuram where Government servants and private sector employees are residing and they commute daily to the city. There is also the main road which connects National Highway No. 5, the Chennai-Calcutta Highway.

I, therefore, urge upon the hon. Railway Minister to provide funds and sanction the project for construction of a railway station near Thathankuppam village, close to 100 feet RoB between Korattur and Villivakkam and also for the stoppage of EMU trains for the convenience of daily commuters.

[Translation]

(x) Need to release adequate funds for repair of National Highway No. 101 between Chhapra and Mohammadpur, Bihar

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Sir, last year, due to floods, my parliamentary constituency alongwith many districts of Bihar got inundated by floods.

National Highway No. 101 between chhapra and Mohammadpur suffered extensive damage due to floods. At present the road is in a bad shape. Besides, connecting two National Highways the National Highway number 101 is of commercial importance. The repair and maintenance of national highway is done only through central assistance. First instalment for it has been released but work has not started till now. Under CRF scheme after administrative clearance for 20 km. rupees 1.70 lakh had been released for starting work on 12.5 km, though, the length of the road is 36.2 km.

Sir, through you, I urge upon the Government to give direction to the State Government to start work under the first instalment and also release the balance amount and call for the estimates for 36.2 km. road from the State Government for construction of Chhatra Satarghat road under CRF scheme and release the remaining fund. In addition to this, the Central Government should invite tenders for the construction of roads in Bihar and take necessary action.

[English]

(xi) Need to grant full subsidy on Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana in Orissa

SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (Cuttack): The worst natural calamity of the millennium in India was perhaps the terrible Super Cyclone, which ravaged the State of Orissa in 1999. Before it could recover fully from the trauma of the Super Cyclone and complete restoration and rehabilitation measures in the affected areas, it continued to be visited by unprecedented floods in 2001 and severe drought which affected all the districts of Orissa in 2002. Due to these facts, the financial position of the State has deteriorated to a great extent. As a result of the difficult resource position, the State Government is unable to provide its 50 per cent share for the newly launched scheme named Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana. Though the beneficiaries are from Below the Poverty Line and have been repeatedly affected by natural calamities, one after another, the State Government is unable to pay this 50 per cent share.

I urge upon the Government to consider to fully subsidise this Valmiki Ambedkar Awas Yojana for urban poor and treat it at par with Indira Awas Yojana as it is being implemented in rural areas.

(xii) Need to remove difficulties being faced by telephone users in Kolhapur Parliamentary Constituency, Maharashtra

SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK (Kolhapur): A major part of Kolhapur Parliamentary constituency in

Maharashtra is in rural area and is adjacent to Karnataka State. Certain policies of the Telecom Department are causing inconvenience to the people. The rent is charged on capacity of exchange. Rent for telephone in exchange capacity of more than 1000 is Rs. 220 against Rs. 100 for smaller places. Exchange capacity does not reflect individual users' financial capacity. This injustice has to be removed. Secondly, people in Inter-State border area cannot use level 95 facility since this facility is not permitted across State borders. As the BSNL is a national Corporation, such restrictions are unjust and unwanted. Thirdly, since landlines have not gone to the remote parts of India, I feel WLL technology will make this possible and BSNL should take the lead and march ahead of other private mobile companies. BSNL rates have to be extremely competitive in comparison to private operators. I feel this will be possible since all technical infrastructure is already in place with BSNL.

Respected Sir, I make this request to the Government and the Telecommunication Minister, through your honour, to remove these anomalies and save the people in rural areas in my constituency from these inconveniences.

[*Translation*]

(xiii) Need to introduce more train services between Navsari and Umargam, Gujarat

SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHRI (Balsad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, road transport is costliest and uncomfortable, but the poor farmers and labourers are still dependent only on road transport. Balsad district of Gujarat is not an exception in this regard. In this predominantly tribal and Harijan inhabited area people are living in object poverty. Vapi and Guldab are one of the big industrial areas of the country. However, people go there by road due to non availability of the rail transport. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAJO SINGH (Begusarai): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, you are not giving time to us. You are allowing only those who are speaking again and again since morning.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rajo Singhji you would have been given the chance to speak, had the notice been given by you. Since your name did not come in the ballot, how can I give you time to speak.

SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHRI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, they spend a major chunk of their salary on transport. Sometimes, due to non-availability of the buses they cannot reach their work place. Considering their problems social activists and peoples representatives are demanding to start a MENU Train between Navsari

and Umargam in addition to providing stoppage of Gujarat Express at Amalsad and Saurashtra Janta at Villimora. Amalsad is a trading centre for cheeku and people have to travel to and from Villimora to Mumbai for earning their livelihood.

I, therefore, urge the Minister of Railways to introduce MENU Train between Navsari and Umargam and provide stoppage of Gujarat Express and Saurashtra Janta at Amalsad and Villimora respectively to solve the problems confronting the poor.

(xiv) Need to provide more facilities at railway Stations for the benefits of physically challenged and sick persons in the country.

SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH (Pratapgarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the difficulties being faced by the physically challenged and sick persons traveling in the trains. When the physically challenged and sick persons arrive at the railway station, they have to face a number of difficulties to reach the railway coach. Firstly, wheel-chairs are not easily available for them. They have to deposit money to get a wheel chair and at many stations, there is no provision for wheel-chairs and the employees of railways extend no help in this regard. If these persons manage to reach their railways-coaches, they have to take the help of other passengers to reach upto their seats because the doors of the coaches are so small that a wheel chair cannot pass through the doors.

I, through the House, urge upon the Government that necessary help should be extended by the Railways to carry the physically challenged and sick persons upto their respective railway coaches from the railway station and necessary arrangements should be made for this purpose.

(xv) Need to clear the proposal for construction of a by-pass at National Highway No. 7 in Rewa district, Madhya Pradesh

SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI (Rewa): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the work relating to the construction of by-pass on National Highway No. 7 in Rewa district of Madhya Pradesh is pending for about last 13 years. This road passes through Rewa city where there are markets and school and college buildings. The movement of traffic remains very busy on this road and a number of accidents occur here every now and then. The number of accidents is very high. Keeping in view the convenience of local public, trade interest, safety of life and property and smooth movement of traffic, it is necessary that the construction of the said by-pass should be done urgently.

[Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari]

The work relating to acquisition of land for this purpose has already been completed. An approximate estimate of Rs. 40.56 crore for its construction under private capital investment has already been sent to the Ministry of Surface Transport by the Chief Engineer, Madhya Pradesh Public Works Department, National Highways, Bhopal on 3 July, 2001. The clearance of the same is still awaited. Earlier, hon'ble Minister had also given an assurance to construct this by-pass on BOT basis.

I request the hon'ble Minister for Surface Transport that keeping in view the utility of a by-pass on National Highway No. 7, clearance for its construction should be given urgently.

14.25 hrs

RAILWAY BUDGET, (2003-2004)—GENERAL
DISCUSSION
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT
(RAILWAYS), 2003-2004
DEMAND FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANT
(RAILWAYS), 2002-2003
DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS (RAILWAYS),
2000-2001—Contd.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now the House will start the discussion on Railway Budget. The balance time is four hours and eleven minutes.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): I think, that includes my reply also.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Yes; you have got to include your reply also. Now Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar): Hon. Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I convey my thanks to you for giving me a chance to speak. At the very outset, I must convey my thanks to the Minister of Railways for giving a good Railway Budget and also for providing opportunity for getting jobs for 20,000 people in his Ministry.
...(Interruptions)

For his good, I can say one thing before I start my original speech. Recently, one of the astrologers, on whom I believe very much, visited me in my constituency. He said: "You can tell the Minister of Railways that this time his horoscope is good. There will be less accidents in the Ministry of Railways." So, you can take it as a message from that astrologer, and there will be less accidents this time.

I am from North-East, he is from Eastern India. There is no difference between Eastern India and the North-East because from the point of view of economic development, there is a variation in degree only. Otherwise, we are equally backward. I come from Barak Valley which consists of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi districts. You have visited and seen that area. I am connected by a metre-gauge line from Lumding to Badarpur. It was constructed in the year 1899 by the Britishers and completed in 1903. It has got 37 tunnels and 565 bridges. One of the bridges, the Cyang-vi-duck bridge, which was constructed, is still a vintage in the history of Indian Railways and also in the history of Railways in Asia. You will be surprised to know that after Independence, there have been various demands from the people of that area. This line serves not only the Barak Valley, that is, Cachar, Karimganj and Silchar, but also the people of Tripura, Manipur as well as Mizoram. We have been demanding that it should be strengthened and the metre-gauge line should be converted into broad-gauge. Unfortunately, it was not agreed to, till the United Front Government came into power in Delhi. Shri H.D. Deve Gowda and Shri Ram Vilas Paswan sanctioned this project. Not only that, they also went and inaugurated it. You were also a part and parcel of the United Front Government. But you were not there. It was bad luck for you.

Though this line had been given, but its development is very tardy. During the course of last so many years, a total of roughly Rs. 270 crore have been given in batches of, say, Rs. 30 crore, Rs. 50 crore, Rs. 60 crore or like that. In this year's Budget also, a meager amount of Rs. 70 crore has been provided. It is a very sad thing. Under the BJP-led NDA Government, whenever any issue comes before the Parliament about the North-East or whenever any debate takes place in this House or the other House or whenever any leader goes to the North-East, he would profusely try to console the people of the North-East, saying: "It is a backward area. We have taken a special package. Ten per cent of the Budget is provided by the North-East."

Recently, the hon. Prime Minister announced Rs. 15,000 crore for Mega Railway Project for the development of infrastructure, and included some projects in the Kashmir area. I welcome this step. This is a right step at the right time. It should have been done long before. But what is the difference between the Kashmir area and the North-Eastern area, I need not explain it to this House. From the point of view of backwardness and economic development, we need more infrastructure. We need conversion of broad gauge line from meter gauge.

This particular line, which is hundred years old, has lost its life span. Any time, it will collapse.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, every year, for three to four months, the line is blocked because of landslides or there is some damage here or there or to some tunnel or the other. In spite of assurances from various hon. Ministers, during our Government's time, I must agree, nothing had been done. I wrote a letter to the hon. Prime Minister stating that either from the non-lapsable fund or from the special fund that is there for the mega projects, something has to be done for this particular project. Unfortunately, nothing has been done.

The reply, that has come to a Starred Question is in negative. It has been reflected in the Railway Budget also. In that declaration of the Prime Minister, a sum of Rs. 763 crore was kept apart for completion of last line projects. I understand from the sources that even now the Railway Minister is deprived of that amount. I do not blame the Railway Minister. I blame those who are in the policy making or decision making. They must strengthen the Railway Ministry by providing some funds so that not only my area but other areas also where such projects are there, which are lifeline project areas, must be given some special incentives so that these lines are extended. I strongly believe that Shri Nitish Kumar will take up this issue with the appropriate authority and convey our feelings. Unless this is done, this will give a wrong message to the people of North-Eastern region specially.

I am really glad when the Prime Minister went there and opened a bridge on Brahmaputra namely Bhogi Bhal. There he assured that this particular bridge will be taken care of and funds will be no constraint. But for this particular line, which serves Tripura, Barrak Valley, Mizoram and Manipur, we need some help.

Meanwhile, I have told the hon. Railway Minister in a meeting that probably he has not taken it up seriously. If it goes on with this Rs. 70 crore or Rs. 80 crore only, it will take 35 years to complete. So, what next? When the project for conversion from Lumding to Silchar has been taken, he has discontinued the metre gauge from Guwahati to Lumding. So, the passengers going to these areas have to make a transshipment in Lumding. Not only that, our goods movement is also being transshipped in Lumding. I will request the hon. Minister—this is a small thing for him—that let the train from Guwahati leave on a metre gauge line. There is enough opportunity. I have spoken to the Railway authorities there. The old line was there and it can be re-laid and we should have a through-

train from Guwahati to Silchar or Karimganj or Dharmanagar, whereby some problems, which we are facing in transshipment at Lumding, will be solved. Meanwhile they can go on doing the work.

The engineers who are working on this line particularly are subject to terrorist threats. They are being attacked now and then. My hats off to the Railway staff, engineers and the officers who are working on this line. So long, whatever money has been given, it has been properly utilised. Progress of the work is good, and many phases have been completed.

Meanwhile the amenities for the passengers in trains, namely, Barrak Express, Cachar Express should be improved. As far as coaches are concerned, I was told by the hon. Minister that they have placed orders for some coaches for the metre gauge line. If they are available, they should be given to this area. Recently, a group of tourists from South went there and met me incidentally in a function. They said that it is really a shame on me that I being the Member of Parliament from this area, have not been able to provide better coaches, better facilities, catering arrangements, etc. in these two trains. That particular aspect may also kindly be looked into.

I will very humbly request the hon. Minister that the projects that have been started now are taken up. They must not be stopped. Once you stop them, they will be in dead-letter box. We must see that these projects go on and more work is done.

Now, I come to the point about the opportunity of our boys getting work. I still remember that one day, we were in a TV serial, 'Talk to the Chief Minister'. He was telling that there was an undue practice of getting the work done by the local contractors. If any local contractor takes the work or under threat they are trying to take it, you stop them. But it must be restricted to the contractors of the North-Eastern Region. We are not becoming parochial because very little scope for us is there. The only opportunity for our boys and for our qualified unemployed engineers to do work is getting the work for ONGC, Assam Oil and Railways. Mr. Minister, you started it but some of the Railway members have given you some advice. I understand that they are saying that some *goondas* try to control the contract. If *goondas* try to take control, then you take harsh measures against them. But the tender should be limited to the North-Western Frontier Railway, that is up to Aliduarpur. It should not go beyond that. You are getting contractors from AP and other States. They have got scope in their areas but we

[Shri Sontosh Mohan dev]

have no other scope in other areas. I request the hon. Railway Minister very humbly to see this particular aspect and take proper action.

There is another demand from our people. There is a line going from New Goalpara to Man Cochar. This line was assured by the previous Minister and this comes under the linguistic and regions minority area. This needs conversion. It is hardly 30 or 40 kilometres. It is connecting Guwahati. This particular work should be taken up.

Before concluding, I must convey my thanks to the hon. Deputy-Speaker for giving me a chance. I know that time is very short. I will not stretch it more.

Lastly, I hope that the hon. Railway Minister will consider my appeal and he, as a very active Minister, will take action as early as possible. Otherwise, the saffron position in my area will not be bright next time and people will answer in the ballot box.

We cannot take bullets. Our area is known as 'island of peace'. Shrimati Indira Gandhi termed it and we are in the national streamline. We do not believe in parochialism. We are an exception in the North-Eastern region but we should be rewarded. There are people who go and tell people to take arms and only then they will be rewarded. But I say: 'No. It is not arms, it is the good behaviour. A reasonable and good citizen will always be rewarded by the Central Government.' I would like to request not only the Railway Minister but also the Railway Board, the hon. Prime Minister and the Finance Minister to look into our demands and help us.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I thank you for confining your speech within the allotted time.

There are hon. Members who want to lay their speeches. I call the following hon. Members to lay their speeches.

1. Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava
2. Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan
3. Shri Chandra Vijaya Singh
4. Shri Virendra Kumar
5. Shri Vinay Kumar Sorake
6. Shri Vilas Muttemwar.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, can we give the speech on tomorrow also?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This item is to be completed today itself, therefore, you give your speech by the evening.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I'll give my speech by 1100 hrs. tomorrow. ...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI VILAS MUTTEWAR (Nagpur): Sir, our only request is that it should come on record. ...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: It will come on record. It will be a part of the record. Your speech will be there.

[Translation]

*SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA (Jaipur): Sir, besides being the capital of Rajasthan, Jaipur has become an important tourist centre on international level. From the tourism point of view, Delhi-Agra-Jaipur is called the golden triangle of India. It is very necessary to connect Jaipur with the entire country straightway through railways for the convenience of Indian and foreign tourists for trade reasons. The city of the Taj Mahal, Agra is situated 240 kms. away from Jaipur.

Gauge conversion work of Bandikui-Agrafort rail line is going on. If more fund is arranged for this, the work will be completed soon and this will save time, labour and money. There are good trade and tourist relations between Jaipur and cities of eastern states like Kolkata, Guwahati, Bhubaneswar etc. After the completion of gauge conversion work on Bandikui-Agrafort route, a short route will be available in place of present very long route. I, therefore, I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister and request him to provide adequate funds for the gauge conversion of this section so that the work may be completed in coming one year or as soon as possible. While inaugurating the Zonal office in Jaipur, you had given assurance to completed Agra-Bandikui line in this budget.

As it is known that Bandikui-Agrafort section has fallen under newly created Divisional Railway Manger, Agra-fort, so, the gauge conversion work should be got done under the supervision of North West Railways. In this situation, the work of gauge conversion should be

*Speech was laid on the Table.

got done under the supervision of North West Railways instead of giving it to Agra division. This way, the work may be completed at the earliest.

Earlier, on the basis of my application, Ministry of Railways introduced trains thrice a week from Jaipur to Bangalore, Earnakulam, Durg (weekly), Guwahati (weekly) and Mumbai (Bandra) and in this budget, trains have been announced from Jaipur to Sealdah (weekly) and Jaipur to Udaipur.

For this, I am grateful to the Ministry, but keeping in view the huge crowd of passengers, trains are needed from Jaipur to the following cities:-There is an urgent need to introduce a train between Jaipur and Haridwar. For this, 4041/4042 Delhi-Mussorie Express may be extended upto Jaipur. It is the demand of the public that this train should start at night from Ajmer-Jaipur and reach Haridwar/Dehradun in the morning and should leave Dehradun/Haridwar in the evening and should reach Jaipur-Ajmer in the morning as a night service, it will facilitate a direct link between Pushkar-Haridwar, the purpose with which the people of Rajasthan go to Haridwar will also be fulfilled.

One passenger express service between Jaipur-Chandigarh-Kalka and one superfast train between Jaipur and Agra via Alwar-Mathura should be started. 2980/2919 Jaipur-Bandra superfast express should be extended upto Pune. One day passenger service between Ajmer-Delhi should be started on route No. 9903/9904. At present, there is no train service available between Jaipur-Delhi in day time. One superfast train service between Jaipur-Trivendrum-Kanyakumari (Biweekly) should also be started.

4760/4759 Jodhpur-Delhi Sarai Rohilla Intercity Express train should be extended upto Delhi Junction and the departure time from Jaipur should be fixed at 06.00 in the morning. Earlier, the departure time of this train was 06.00 and this train used to run upto Delhi junction. This change has generated great anger among the public and due to fall in passenger traffic, rail revenue has gone down. In the meeting of Railway Advisory Committee, you had agreed to my demand of running this train upto Delhi Junction instead of Sarai Rohilla. A train should be started from Jaipur to Gorakhpur.

Earlier, Jaipur-Bandra Express used to leave Jaipur at 0700 in the morning and reach Ajmer at 0940. At that time, daily passengers traveled to Ajmer by this train. Now, this train consists of 24 coaches and its departure time from Jaipur has been fixed at 0840. Now, this train reaches Ajmer at 1115 which is causing great problem to daily passengers in reaching their offices at Ajmer in

time. I request you to start a new commuter train between Jaipur-Ajmer which should leave Jaipur at 0700 in the morning and reach Ajmer at 0940, it will facilitate great convenience to daily passengers and help in increasing revenue of railways.

Keeping in view, the strong demand of the train passengers of this area, the frequency of the following trains needs to be increased. Keeping in view the strong demand of the public, I expect to fulfil the much awaited demand of running 2968/2967 Jaipur-Chennai Express daily. There is an urgent need to run 4312/4311 new Bhuj-Bareilly Express daily which runs twice a week. 2978/2977 Jaipur-Ernakulam superfast weekly express needs to be run at least thrice a week.

There is a need of providing stoppage of some trains at following stations to fulfill the repeated demands of train passengers of this area. There is a need to provide stoppage of 2916/2915 Delhi-Ahmedabad Superfast Ashram Express and 9265/9266 Okha-Dehradun Express (weekly) at Phulera, Kishengarh. There is a need to provide stoppage of 4312/4311 New Bhuj-Bareilly Express (Bi-weekly) at Khairthal, Dausa and Rajgarh, 2466/2465 Jodhpur-Sawai Madhopur Inter-City Express should be run as a passenger train between Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur and there is also need to provide stoppage of 9263/9264 Porbandar-Delhi and 9265/9266 Okha-Dehradun Express at Durgapura, Sanganer, Niwai Vanasthali, Eesarada, Chauth Kaa Barwada and Bandikui.

In view of the pace of growth of the railway, the pressure of goods traffic will increase very much in the coming years and efforts are required to be made in this regard from now. A number of trains run on Jaipur-Phulera route. It affects the speed of trains like Shatabdi Express. It will be beneficial from the economic point of view if efforts are made to increase the speed of Delhi-Ajmer Shatabdi Express and if Phulera-Jaipur rail line is converted into double line of broad gauge and as it will save time and loading capacity. There is a need of railway bypass for goods train keeping in view the number of railway crossings in Jaipur, so that no goods train reaches Jaipur and time and labour of passenger and goods trains may be saved. It will solve the problem of railway crossings being faced by the residents of Jaipur.

The Jodhpur-Jaipur-Delhi Intercity Express No. 4860/4859 has been extended upto Sarai Rohilla from 1st July, which will create a lot of problems for the people going to Delhi. Most of the people traveling to Delhi have to go to Chandni Chowk, Khari Baowli, Sadar Bazar, Daryaganj, Supreme Court, Patiala House, High Court and Central Secretariat. If that train will go upto Sarai

[Shri Girdhari Lal Bhargava]

Rohilla only, it will create problems for the people going to Delhi. So, this train should be extended upto Delhi so that the passengers do not face any problems.

Coal Division should be connected to North-Western Zonal office situated at Jaipur. There is no train between Jaipur and Delhi at day time which reaches Delhi in evening so that the connecting trains for other places can be boarded from there after 7 o' clock in the evening.

[English]

*SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil): Sir, while welcoming the proposals in regard to the development of railways as a whole, I will be failing in my duty if do not point out the discrimination against the Southern states, Kerala in particular. The funds allotted for the year in respect of ongoing works are quite insufficient. The provision for rail doubling is quite unsatisfactory. In the matter of electrification also there is no improvement.

The railway bridges across the rivers in Karala are century old. There is no attempt to replace the old bridges on a time bound basis. The people are always demanding for new level crossing because of the doubling process. The unmanned level crossing is highly dangerous. The railway administration should take immediate steps for sanctioning new railway level crossings.

In the matter of foot over bridges, a number of requests have come up from constituency. There are requests from Varkala, Chirayinkeezhil and Kazhakootam. The demands are just and reasonable. I hope the railway administration will take urgent steps for opening foot over bridges in these stations. Most of the railway stations in my constituency are outdated. They require immediate re-modeling. The public conveniences in these stations are inadequate. Urgent steps will have to be taken in providing these amenities.

Regarding the stoppage of trains, there has been lot of complaints from the public. There is a general feeling that all intermediate stations between Kollam and Trivandrum are neglected.

Varkala is an international tourists centre. Tourists from all over the world visit the place every year. It is also a major pilgrim centre in South India where the greatest social reformer Sree Narayana Guru Samadhi is situated. Lakhs of people visit the place every year from all over India. It is very regretted that some long distance

trains do not have a stop at Varkala. In many high level meetings, it has been decided to provide stops at Varkala for all the trains. But the decision has not implemented so far. I take this opportunity to ask the railway administration for the implementation of stoppage of trains at Varkala without further delay. The details were given in the conferences held previously by the General Manager, Southern Railways and in the conference of Kerala MPs convened by the Hon'ble Railway Minister, those decisions are still pending. There is a long-standing demand for providing a stop for Day Express at Chirayinkeezhil. It was formally agreed at the conference. The decision has also not yet implemented. I ask the Railway Ministry for immediate action in this matter.

Passenger amenities are also inadequate in many ways. The latrine facilities are deplorable. It will have to be improved without further delay. Parking facilities are also quite inadequate. The coaches provided are outdated. Some of the shuttle service trains are provided with coaches, in which passenger traffic is not possible when it is raining. The electric fillings are obsolete. It is also risky to travel during night that there is no light inside the compartments.

The safety measures provided are also risky. The most pitiable conditions are created by the inordinate delay in the matter of running of trains. People will have to wait for hours in the platform to catch a train for their destination. This is a deplorable situation. I ask the Railway Administration to take prompt action in the running of trains as per schedule. There are some other grievances which are to be redressed without delay.

With these words, I conclude.

*SHRI CHANDRA VIJAY SINGH (Moradabad): Firstly I wish to congratulate the Hon. Railway Minister for a public-friendly budget and for resisting the temptation to increase passengers and freight fares.

There is little doubt that he is among the better Railway Minister we have and that view cuts across the partly lines.

What surprises me, however, is that Moradabad Division stands ignored in his generous dispensation. And this is a town that earns valuable foreign exchange to the tune of 2000 crores annually for India.

We make many demands on that score, unfortunately most go ignored, much to our disgust. We were hoping for a better deal from the Railway Minister. Our long-standing demand for creation of a High Court Bench in

*Speech was laid on the Table.

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West UP, draws the most embarrassed silence. This still requires lakhs of litigants to commute to Allahabad High Court, hundreds of miles away. The Rail Minister can help those lakhs of commuters if he extends the Triveni Express, from Allahabad to Bareilly, by just 50 odd kilometers to reach Moradabad. We promise him good business, and commercial viability.

For strategic reasons, connectivity of the Hill areas, to Central India is important. If an express train from Agra to Dehradun, via Aligarh, Chandausi & Moradabad is considered, it will help in times of troop movement and millions will benefit in peacetime.

The Bareilly-Dadar Express should be routed through Chandausi, as this will provide relief to Moradabad & Badaun districts.

Likewise, Sir, the duplicate Punjab Mail, Train No. 3050 (Howrah-Amritsar) can easily be re-routed to pass through Chandausi, which again, will help passengers from Badaun & Sambhal.

Train Nos. 429/431/434 of NER should halt at Jalpur station on the Ramnagar route. Your officials erroneously informed you that the distance between Jalpur Halt and the nearest station is merely one Kilometer, when, in fact, it is ten Kms. as has been borne out in the Station Masters report I hand over to you.

No provision has been made for manned/unmanned crossings in our Division, and I lose many constituents annually, killed on your tracks, as a consequence. Hakimpur, Govindnagar are two where the need is great for either manned or unmanned crossings.

Post-Independence, half of Moradabad has gone across the present Rail Line and station, and has, quite appropriately, been called "Line Paar", and the requirement for a second entry, platform, overbridge and ticket counter is very pressing.

Raja-ka-Sahaspur Junction, in Moradabad Division, has an old link to Sambhal, with only one erratic train plying. We have often requested for the starting of a Rail Bus on that route. Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav representing Sambhal Parliamentary constituency should not come in the way of granting as a rail bus.

Lastly, Sir, on a national level, do provide you passengers relief from the early morning vision from trains throughout the country, of seeing their fellow countrymen,

in various stages of undress, going about their ablutions in Full Monty style. Provide them privacy and your passengers relief, from this daily odious spectacle.

[Translation]

*SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR (Sagar): Sir, the Railway budget presented by Hon'ble Minister of Railways is very progressive railway budget in view of extension of rail facilities. On the one hand passenger fair has not been increased at the same time fair of many important Shatabdi and Janshabdi trains has been reduced. The common man will be benefited by these measure and more and more rail passengers will avail the facility of these trains. Along with this Ministry of railways has tried to facilitate trade by not enhancing freight rate. I congratulate Hon'ble Minister of Railways for this. Recently fast express special Goods transport service for Delhi-Kishanganj has been started by Bhopal Division which has been named as 'Gatiman Sewa'. Traders have welcomed this 'Gatiman Sewa' heartily. If services like this are started throughout the country traders will be benefited in large numbers and the goods will reach to their destination in lesser period.

Hon'ble Minister has announced Jabalpur-Kota express passing through my constituency on Bina-Katani section, for that I congratulate him personally and on behalf of the people of my constituency but I would also like to draw his attention to some of the main problems of my constituency.

Bhopal-Hawrah Express, announced in Last year's railway budget is a weekly train which should run at least 4 days in a week. Kshipra Express from Indore to Howrah should run via Sagar, Damoh, Vidisha and Satna and should run for full seven days of the week. This is a long pending demand of the rail passengers. The revenue figures of this train reveal that this is a profit making train throughout the year. Pilgrims of Jain community visit Bihar by this train. Therefore Kshipra Express should be run for all seven days in a week. Train No. 8235/8236, Bhopal-Bilaspur should be extended up to Durg and it should be converted into a fast passenger Train No. 189/190, Kota-Damoh should be extended to Jaipur-Jabalpur and be converted into fast passenger. Bina-Katni Train No. 1504/1505 should be extended upto Bina-Chopan. Train No. 407/408 Chirmir-Damoh should run upto Chirmir-Sagar. Train No. 1271/1272, Bina Itarsi Express should be made to run from Bina to Nagpur.

*Speech was laid on the table.

[Shri Virendra Kumar]

Train No. 2411/2412 Jabalpur-Nizamuddin-Gondwana Express should run as a full train upto Nizamuddin. At present half of this train starts from Jabalpur and half of it starts from Bhusawal. Bilaspur, which gets linked in Bina, whereas to travel from Jabalpur to Bina, one has to face a lot of problems despite reservation due to shortage of passenger boggies and many soldiers travel from Sagar, which is a big army centre, to Delhi. So keeping in view the large number of passenger here, it is necessary to run this train as a full train.

Shuttle services should be started from Katani to Nagda Ujjain, from Sagar to Shahdol Budhar and from Domoh to Jhansi and Sagar, Jabalpur so that traveling for short distances may be facilitated.

For Sagar to Lucknow rail service, four boggies should be added to 8235 Bhopal-Bilaspur which should be separated at Katni and added to Jabalpur-Lucknow-Chitrakoot Express. In the return journey these bogies should be separated again at Katni and should be attached to 8236 Bilaspur-Bhopal Express.

Makronia station is an important sub-urban station of Sagar. It is absolutely necessary to give two minutes stoppage for every Express Trains here. It is also necessary to make one footpath over bridge at the Makronia station because most of the times Goods trains are kept here in parked condition and when passengers have to go from platform no. 1 to platform no. 2 they have to pass through the belly of these Goods trains, because of this so many accidents have taken place.

A rail over bridge needs to be constructed very soon on the national highway No. 86 passing through Mumbai cabin near Makronia station. Ganeshganj (Shahpur) station had stoppage for Utkal Kalinga Express earlier, which should be provided again and there is an urgent need to construct one footpath over bridge on the Ganeshganj station.

Followers of Jainism visit Bihar in large numbers for a pilgrimage to Shikharjee from Zaruba Khara Station, so the demand of Jain community to have the stoppage of Kshipra Express and Gondwana Express is pending since long. So the said stoppage has become necessary keeping in view the long pending demand. Passengers have to travel underneath Goods trains to cross to platform no. 2 from platform no. 1 because Goods trains are kept there in parking. Many accidents have also taken place here. Passengers have been demanding for the construction of a footpath and Rail over bridge here since very long, so one footpath and over bridge should be constructed at Zabrukhera station.

Previously, there was a stoppage of Pathankot Express at Karounda Station but later on this was discontinued. Keeping in view the problems of the passengers the stoppage of Pathankot Express at Karounda Station may be provided once again.

Dangidhar station may be developed and facility of railway ticket booking may be provided there. Presently, there is a stoppage of passenger trains at this station but no tickets are issued.

Anandpur Trust on the Bina-Guna Line is a famous pilgrimage. Large number of devotees from our country and abroad visit this place. The stoppage of Goa, Pushpak trains is provided at Bina for limited days four times in a year in order to facilitate passengers to visit this place. We thank Railway Minister for providing the stoppage of Karnataka Express at Bina. We urge that the stoppage of the Goa-Pushpak train may also be provided at Bina immediately.

Mandi Bamora is a main anaz mandi (grain market). A good number of followers of Jain religion go to Bihar to visit pilgrimage Shikhar ji and also visit district headquarter-Sagar. There has been a demand for providing a stoppage of Kshipra Express at Mandi Bamora for a long time. It is, therefore, requested to provide stoppage of Kshipra Express at Mandi Bamora.

There is no train available at Sagar after 12.00 O' clock and before 7.15 in the evening to go to Bina. Similarly, no train is available between Sagar and Katni after the departure of Bhopal-Bilaspur train, which leaves Sagar at 1.00 for Katni. After this train there is a train at 8.15 in the night for Katni. It is, therefore, necessary that a passenger train from both the sides may be introduced during the gap. Jabalpur-Bhopal Janshatabdi is unable to earn revenue via Itarsi route. It is, therefore, urged that on the demand of the public of Jabalpur-Katni-Damoh-Sagar-Bina, this train may be run via Jabalpur-Katni-Bina route thrice a week.

The number of general bogies in every express train may be increased so that the passengers who do not have reservation can get seat in the train. Sagar holds the honour of being the headquarters of Seeng' and having the oldest university of Madhya Pradesh. Besides, it is also an important business centre. It is, therefore, urged that the status of model railway station may be given to Sagar and it may be converted into the most modern railway station.

There is a need to improve the catering service in the trains. A number of complaints have been received

regarding the catering services during past days. Therefore, the Railway officials must look into this matter seriously, and take steps to improve this service.

Bina is an important railway station on Delhi-Itarsi line in my constituency. Jhansi Railway crossing near Bina station remains closed most of the time due to being located on very busy railway line. This railway crossing is opened for few minutes only and closed immediately thereafter. In such a short time, only half of the traffic is cleared and other vehicles have to wait again. It is, therefore, urged that keeping in view the inconvenience of the public a railway overbridge may be constructed at Jhansi gate immediately.

[English]

*SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE (Udupi): The Railway Budget-2003 now under deliberation is nothing more than an Annual Report and Statement of Accounts of the Ministry of Railways.

But the Hon'ble Minister has cleverly used this occasion to announce a high-sounding project Rashtriya Rail Vikas Yojana launched by the Prime Minister and also introduction of new trains on routes already saturated with heavy traffic.

If the Government has the will to utilise the sources sensibly for improvement in rail services and amenities, the travelling public will not grudge paying more. But the Minister has failed to tap sources of mobilisation of funds by not announcing any hike in fares or freight. Budgetary support is also declining steeply over the years. It is not known how the Railways is going to take up on-going projects of gauge conversion for which very little funds have been allotted.

My constituency falls under rail network of Konkan Railway Corporation. In the last year's Budget speech the Minister had praised Konkan for its efficiency and operations but the Centre seems to meet out step-motherly treatment to KRC.

The formation of new zone (South Western) based at Hubli has been welcomed by the people of Karnataka. The existing Mysore Division of Southern Railway has now been transferred to SW Railway. But strangely, the Mangalore (Kankanady) station is still left within the jurisdiction of Pallakkad Division of Southern Railway. It would in order to include Mangalore (Kandanady) station in the SW zone by divesting it from Palakkad jurisdiction for better administrative and operating efficiency.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

Udupi is an important station in Dakshin Kannada serving a large population. Udupi is also a commercial, trading and religious place drawing pilgrims and tourists from all over India and abroad. It generates enough passenger revenue—perhaps more than that of Mangalore (Kandandady) yet there are no facilities as retiring rooms, waiting rooms, baths/laboratories (toilets) to cater to large number of passengers alighting here. The same condition applies to other stations on the route like Surathakal and Kundapura etc.

There has been a long-standing demand from the public for providing stoppage for Nizamuddin-Trivandrum Rajdhani Express trains at Udupi. The Konkan Railway Corporation has also endorsed the need for such a stop-over at Udupi. So is the demand for providing stoppage for Mangala Express at Kundapura another important station from where lot of passengers board the train. The timings of important mail/express trains both at Kundapura and Udupi/Mangalore are inconvenient as presently trains pass through the area during mid-night. For the convenience of travelling public especially women and children, the timings should be changed to early morning or late evenings.

For both Mangala and Rajadhani trains, Mangalore (Kankanady) and Udupi are intermediate stations with less reservation quota. Considering the large number of passengers boarding the trains here, quota for both AC class and Second Sleeper should be increased.

Another issue I want to take up is the construction of over-bridges and under-bridges at railway level crossings on Konkan route. Presently lot of time and fuel is wasted due to blockade of level crossings frequently. There is also a provision to utilise a part of Central Road Fund by railways for providing such overbridges/underbridges.

Most of stations on the Konkan route in my region lack amenities like platform shelter etc. Many commercial and other financial institutions like banks etc. are willing to provide such shelters for use by railway passengers as donations. I would request the railway authorities to utilise such public assistance and involve the locals representing trade, commerce and banking in such activities. Many banks and commercial institutions in the area are willing to sponsor such public amenities in railway station premises.

Provision of basic amenities at Udupi, which draws a large number of tourists and pilgrims every day, like more licensed porters and pre-paid auto-rickshaw stand etc. should be considered.

[Shri Vinay Kumar Sorake]

Number of such demands from the public has been given to Konkan Railway Officials for improvement of station premises and amenities at Tokur, Surathka, Mulki, Padubidri, Barkur, Kundapura, Senapura, Bijoor, Shiroor etc. and I request the Minister for making adequate provisions in this regard.

My region lacks in connectivity through Superfast trains like Shatabdi etc. Presently there is a Shatabdi train running upto Madgaon (on Konkan route) and this should be extended to Mangalore for earning better passenger revenue. Further to serve the common man, a passenger train between Karwar to Mangalore should also be introduced mostly for use of daily commuters, which will lessen dependence on already crowded buses. Kollur Mookambika Temple (Railway Station: Kundapura) draws a large number of pilgrims daily from adjoining States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and existing trains cannot handle such rush. It is, therefore, demanded that a new train to and from Kundapura to Kerala side and Northwards be introduced to serve the pilgrims.

Hassan-Mangalore rail link (meter gauge) used to serve my region to limited extent. In the wake of gauge conversion, the same was dismantled. In other sectors in India the gauge conversion was done without dismantling the existing track causing no interruption to existing services. But some forces of gauge project diverted elsewhere as they want to keep the Dakshina Kannada region, remove and unconnected. It is almost eight years, the work at Mangalore-Hassan link is stalled for want of funds, I request that adequate funds be provided for completion of this vital link to avoid project cost escalation.

Dakshina Kannada region has contributed immensely through manpower and land for the establishment of Konkan railways. Many families have given away their meagre land holdings at meagre compensation for laying the track but in the matter of employment and licences for platform vending etc. they are not being compensated adequately. I request that a member from each displaced family be considered for employment in Konkan Railway as also opportunities to earn a living through vending in railway station on the route. The completion of Hassan-Mangalore link provide a boost for the development of New Mangalore Port by moving cargo from producing centres such as Coffee, Rubber and other plantation crops. Further this link will provide as easy flow for petro products from MRPL to Bangalore and other urban areas. Because of emerging Special Economic Zones and export oriented technology parks, it would be in order to provide them connectivity to Mangalore port via the Hassan-Mangalore link.

*SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (Nagpur): Sir, I am grateful to you and to my leader Smt. Sonia Gandhiji to give me this opportunity to participate the debate on the Railway Budget for 2003-2004.

Sir, it is indeed a matter of national pride that we have a rail system, largest in the world, run more than 13500 trains across 7000 stations every day with 63000 km. route and a little less than two million work force. Besides, rendering service to enable perform journeys catering varied needs—employment, business, profession, meeting kith and kin, pleasure trips and long cherished pilgrimages—rails are a most powerful means to instill in the people a sense of national belonging. Particularly for the poor people this is the most accessible mode. Thus, this public utility service has to be efficient, economical, safe and friendly to the travelling public.

I am sorry that I find myself unable to persuade to say that the Budget presented to this August House would achieve any worthwhile objectives. In fact, my good friend Nitish ji has greatly disappointed me by presenting lifeless budget. The Railway Minister has miserably failed to genuinely grapple with the burgeoning commercial challenges. Perhaps it would be better if we learnt from our own experience and prevented the railways from being derailed by half hearted measures.

It is for the first time in history the railways anticipated a decline of 2.8% in the number of passengers carried in 2002-03 over 2001-02. Significantly, the decline is projected to be steep 2.7% of the most popular class ordinary second class travel. It is hard to reconcile this decline with the growing prosperity and an increasing population.

There has been steady decline in contributions from internal resources of the railways to the annual plan expenditure resulting in increased reliance on borrowings from the market. This is bound to land the railways in debt trap

According to the "action plan for the revival of railways if borrowings continued at this rate the lease payment liability might go up to a high level of Rs. 6000 crores a year for market borrowing of Rs. 3000 crores." Nobody would grudge the railways by resorting to borrowings by way of bonds and fixed deposits for the development of infrastructure and arrest consolidations including modernisation but the spending need to be planned and purposeful capable of delivering the desired results.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

In view of the existing trend of privatising every sector of the government, government might be thinking of privatising this gigantic organisation also. I know that many people may be interested to invest in the railways but this has to be done very carefully.

We have had already long years of poor growth and higher poverty ratio. There is huge investment backlog for the railways which according to an expert is Rs. 50,000 crores. The projection of internal resources of the railways present a dismal picture. What the expert group headed by Rakesh Mohan observed "the economics of the Indian Railways is now extremely vulnerable with its ability to invest adequately in providing efficient and cost competitive services in question." Indian Railways is fundamentally a commercial entity which needs to achieve independent self sustaining financial viability. It cannot be expected to make un-remunerative business decisions unless it is directly and fully compensated.

The financial crunch being faced by the railways would effect the development works. Through the operating ratio of the railways has been increased optimally but no worthwhile efforts have been made to bring down the expenditure.

The Standing Committee on Railways too have commented adversely in its various reports about the functioning of the railways in lackadaisical manner. The Committee in one of its report felt that "there is scope to plug the leakage of revenue from ticket-less travelling, the menace of touts, un-booked luggage and booked luggage showing less weight, the diversion of funds from one project to another."

Pilferage of resources and waste going on merely in Railways in more than one way must stop. Ticket-less travelling and manipulations in goods booking with the support of Railway staff for considerations continue to cause enormous loss of revenue. How came tout system flourishes despite computerisation. While reservation counters display long waiting lists, instantaneous reservations is possible through touts and obliging staff. This is only one example of complain. There are many more and I think Hon'ble Railway Minister is aware of them and the need is to send the message of toughness across the administration at all levels.

I think with suitable alertness and vigilance it should not be much difficult to make the railway administration efficient and corruption free.

The top heavy administration of railways seems to be pursuing the same old system, enjoying privileges and perks with a life style of Britishers. There has been lot of unproductive expenditure on this account. Railways should take appropriate steps to utilise these funds on capital infrastructure and maintenance.

There is another source inadequately tapped and that is large area of land owned by the Railways at different places. Mumbai is having plenty of railway land vacant nearby its stations which have remained unutilised for number of years. Mumbai being the commercial capital of the country, its stations should be further developed and modernised so as to provide better facilities to the people. The surplus land could be disposed off which could earn crores of rupees and utilised for developmental purposes.

The disposal off railway properties which include large land all over the country has got to be save from encroachment and usurpation. This needs immediate attention of the Government which is absolutely necessary. Funds earned out of it should be spent on commercial building activity, expansion of railways and introduction of new technology and efficiency. Wherever land is required to further expansion of railways it ought to be retained and protected against encroachment and usurpation.

The Controller and Auditor General of India (CAG) in its report for 1998-99 says, "at the Railways Board level, there is no indication of any effort to monitor siding management". At the levels of zonal railways and divisions too, there are no financial nodal authorities where complete records on siding management, covering different aspects such as ownership of land used for assisted sidings, execution of agreements, opening/closure of sidings revision and recovery of charges, inspection, etc. are maintained.

The Moti Bagh Workshop was established as far back as 1879 and was assigned POH of narrow gauge diesel locomotives, coaches and goods stock including manufacturing coaches for narrow gauge track. However, with the adoption of unit gauge policy, this workshop needs some changes so as to make it fit for BG coach POH work etc. This could also obviate the chances of reducing the staff drastically. The reduction in the staff has created lot of resentment amongst the staff working there for over number of years. This staff has gained

[Shri Vilas Muttemwar]

tremendous experience in the POH of narrow gauge diesel locomotive coaches etc. Their expertise can be extensively utilised for augmentation of the infrastructure facilities for BG coach POH work in the Moti Bagh Workshop, Nagpur. With a little more investment, the infrastructure can easily be created for its upgradation from narrow gauge to broad gauge.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Government to retain this workshop at Nagpur and to provide the necessary funds for its upgradation, renovation and retention at Nagpur itself.

The prevailing conditions at most of the railway stations is really pathetic. These are not being properly cleaned, provided with the basic dire necessities, insecure conditions, lacking of reservation facilities, inadequate waiting & cloak rooms, poor arrangement for refreshment, poor condition of public utility services etc. This need to be looked into as the money generated by the railways has to be utilised to some extent for providing better facilities to the travelling public.

Ajani is located in the heart of the Nagpur city and could easily cater to the needs of majority of the people in the city if this station is properly developed so as to reduce the pressure on the existing Nagpur railway station. There is plenty of land available for its proper development without any financial liability on the railways. This station could be developed on Built, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis.

In priorities for resource utilisation, the guiding principle should be the consolidation of existing lines consistent with consideration of safety and passenger amenities. New lines should be undertaken, particularly those which are not viable, only for over riding national interest of unity and security.

It is tragic to note that there is no decline in the number of both major and minor railway accidents during the last year involving large number of casualties and loss of rail property has increased during the last year. Quite a large number of innocent citizens have lost their lives by these tragic accidents.

The cost of damage to railways track and rolling stock and interruptions through communication on account of train accidents also increased considerably during the last year. All this can't be wished away as the outcome of human error or systematic failure. It is only appropriate to laurel and reward the services of dedicated and honest railway staff but it is equally, if not, more important to punish those who are inefficient or corrupt or both.

Privatisation should not be considered and adopted as a fashion, as it would render work force surplus and result in demoralisation. Instead there should be perceptible improvement in efficiency and the standard of service and checking pilferages through different means at all levels. This needs to be plugged to conserve resources.

Sir, let me reiterate our suggestions made year after year regarding Vidarbha region to the Hon'ble Railway Minister regarding establishment of "Goods Truck Transport Hub Through Railway Wagon At Nagpur" which apart from benefiting the region will also give a boost to the Railway in getting more revenue. Unequivocally, Nagpur is centrally located and most suitable place which is the geographical capital of the country, second capital of Maharashtra and second greenest city, it has good ancillary infrastructure, road and rail connections. Not only that, country's zeromile starts from Nagpur and nearly 100 cities of our country are directly connected with Nagpur.

Therefore, Nagpur should be the base station of this proposal. The route may be Delhi-Nagpur, Bangalore-Mumbai, Mumbai-Delhi and Delhi-Calcutta. Railway should arrange wagon like open with modification for two trucks loading in a wagon. So 100 trucks in 50 wagons rake in one route with electric engine pulling can be transported at a time. Fortunately, Nagpur is one Central and South Eastern Railway line having their Divisional Offices.

The main purposes of truck loading in wagon will be reduction in diesel consumption. It will reduce the congestion on the roads as well as on national highways. The truck loading in wagon will also help the industries, traders, transporters etc. to despatch the goods by the consignor in a good condition.

The following proposals are pending with the Government for a long time. We have been regularly appealing the Hon'ble Railway Ministers to kindly consider them favourably so that these proposals are implemented as early as possible.

1. Construction of railway underbridge on Mumbai-Howrah rail route at Kamptee Area (Nagpur).
2. Requirement of Ring Rail facility at Nagpur.
3. Shifting of Central Railway Office from Mumbai to Nagpur.

Sir, I once again emphasised the need for early sanctioning of our pending proposals so that the Maharashtra is in a position to develop and give a lead in economic development of the country.

It is most unfortunate to point out that Vidarbha region has received step-motherly treatment at the hands of my friend Mr. Nitish Kumar. The budget proposed to introduce new Shatabdi Express trains but it is disheartening to find that no new train passes through the centrally located Vidarbha region. On the other hand the budget does not give any incentives for this region and has treated Vidarbha as a neglected region. Vidarbha has been persistently demanding efficient passenger and goods trains network in the region because the rail lines from east to west and north to south converge in the region. Nagpur and Wardha are such junctions from where accessibility to all the four corners of the country is possible through rail lines but this fact has also been blissfully ignored.

More than 50 Express Trains pass through Nagpur city every day. In spite of this, it is highly surprising that only 2 daily trains originate and terminate from at Nagpur, the second capital of Maharashtra, as a pointer to the inserting negligence which about 35 lakh population of Nagpur city have witnessed in 50 years.

The freight has sought to be rationalised but the burden would be on the common man. Similarly, in a bid to rationalise the passenger fares the lower class fare has been increased between 10%-15% while the AC Class fare has been brought down. Even the monthly railway ticket facility, mostly availed of by salary and middle income group people, has not spared from the fare hike.

During the previous years budget, the Railway Minister propose to upgrade prominent railway stations to "model railway stations" and Nagpur is one of them. But nothing worthwhile has so far been done to implement this decision. There are insufficient reservation counters at Nagpur railway station and with a view to meet the demand more reservation terminals/counters are required to be open immediately in the city. Further, the quota of berths allotted for the users from Nagpur is very low and requires to be increased suitably.

I vehemently plead with the Railway Minister to urgently and sympathetically consider the introduction of direct trains originating from Nagpur to New Delhi, Howrah, Chennai, Lucknow, Hyderabad and Aurangabad. This work apart from giving much needed relief to the passengers will also augment the earnings of the railways.

frequency of existing weekly/Bi/Tri weekly trains from Howrah, Gaya, Happa, Pune, Jaipur-Chennai and Kurla Deluxe trains may be further increased.

Tens of million of people daily used the services of this monolith organisation. Railways provide direct and indirect employment to millions of teeming people of Indian and obviously, therefore, any problem are dislocation in the smooth working of this organisation causes serious concern and dislocation in the day-to-day schedule of the citizens.

Though some steps have been by the Indian Railways from time to time to improve the services but unfortunately people are far from satisfied and the Railways have to except the blame for its failure to deliver the goods to the people expectations. It is therefore, highly incumbent upon the authorities to make consulted efforts to understand the problems of the people and to solve them.

Privatisation and modernisation are no panacea for ills like this which can be removed by ushering the larger work force into a new work culture of dedication and honesty.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Hon. Members, there are as many as 57 hon. Members to speak. You can understand the difficulty. So, I request all of you to please confine you speeches to the time allotted.

Shri Prabhat Samantray.

SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY (Kendrapara): Thank you, Sir.

This probably for the first time that I have seen hon. Members from across party lines congratulating hon. Minister of Railways for presenting a good Budget.

This is not only a good Budget but will also work towards achieving the objectives set last year by the hon. Minister in his Budget Speech by formulating a new policy of allotment of funds. For that also, I join other hon. Members in thanking and congratulating the hon. Minister of Railways.

It has also been said that this Budget is meant for the people. I should say, this is a Budget where the Minister of Railways has put people before politics. It is for the first time that a Budget has been prepared keeping in mind the interest and welfare of the passengers and commuters in our trains. This is a Budget intended to enhance the revenue for the Railways and also to provide new trains and facilities. So, it could be called a 'People's Budget'.

It is probably the first time that the Railway Budget has changed track towards a new dimension. This has

[Shri Prabhat Samantray]

been achieved only now since the British days. We had inherited 55,000 route-kilometres from the British *raj* and by the year 2000 it had gone up to only 63,000 route-kilometres, which is only a negligible improvement.

In the earlier Railway Budgets, funds were allocated and new tracks were considered on individual influence and considering the political party in power. This Budget is a clear departure in the direction. It is not influenced by politics or by the party in power but it has taken into account only the interest of the Railways. So, I thank the hon. Minister of Railways for giving a new culture and a new dimension to the railway system and its management.

The mobilisation of resources was a problem for Railways, for its improvement. I believe, it has been suggested by various hon. Members that unless more resources are found, the railway system cannot be updated or improved.

We know that about one crore people are travelling by train every day all over the country. To manage their welfare as well as to earn profits is not a small thing. The mess created in the earlier years needs to be rectified and that cannot be done in a day. Since the last year, a policy decision has been taken and the Budget this year is on the right track, giving a new look.

There have been trade enquiries from European Union and other World Trade Organisation for inventing here in our Railways. I have my apprehension whether the hon. Minister has privatisation in mind. I need to be apprised in what way the privatisation would be done in the railway system.

We have introduced privatisation in the railway system, that is, in catering, supply of bedrolls, etc. It needs to be reappraised because the functioning of the catering system and functioning of all these supplies for the passengers who are in the train is not that good as has been promised to the people. I believe, it is more deteriorating than it was earlier through the railway system itself.

Another thing that I would like to say is about the resource mobilisation, particularly land acquisition. About 25,000 acres of surplus land is with the Railways, which needs to be properly managed. If it could be leased out on commercial basis, then it will generate about Rs. 2,63,000 crore.

I have information with me that in Railway Zones, in North Frontier and in the Northern Railway system, railway

lands have not only been encroached but also a lot of cinema halls have been constructed over them. It gives me an impression as if the railway officers therein have never looked to all these things. So, it needs a proper handling and that could alone give a lot of revenue for the Railways.

Though the freight charges have not been increased this time, yet the freight that has been fixed earlier has been fixed on considerations. We have analysed it. The lobbies which could manipulate and influence to have the freight charges in the railway system, have done it. It has been rationalised slowly. For example, wood-timber and firewood has been equalised with the manufacturing of paper. The present freight structure helps large and prime timber merchants and rayon pulp manufactures. It has been equalised last year. What happens by doing so? The *janata* notebook, which was provided through the Janta Government of 1978, has been closed because the paper manufacturers have enhanced their prices and it needs to be looked into. This type of freight charges on the instruction of an individual industry kills the Railways' interest. I think, the hon. Minister of Railways does not have the scope to look into each and every charge that has been levied against each and every freight. So, if that is rationalised properly, then it will improve the freight consignment in the railway system.

I was telling that we have inherited about 53,000 route kilometres from the British time. We have reached only upto 63,140 route kilometres by 2002. So, it is not a very good achievement. It is a very negligible improvement in the route kilometres looking to the hundred crore people of this country. The railway system is the cheapest mode of transportation for the public commuters as well as in respect of freight movement. So, they should rise to the occasion to provide more and more route kilometres so that our necessity can be fulfilled.

Here I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that in Orissa we are having 2,309 route kilometres. It was probably linking West Bengal and Chennai during the Second World War time. During the British time, only 1,400 route kilometres were there.

Though we had some route kilometres in Orissa region after Independence, I would say that comparing to our neighbouring States of Bihar and West Bengal, it is negligible. The national route kilometres is 19 per cent, and that of Orissa is 14.4 per cent whereas in the case of Bihar it is 30 per cent, and 43.1 per cent in the case of West Bengal. Considering this, Orissa needs to be looked after.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shir Prabhat Samantray, you have already exceeded the time allotted. Please conclude.

SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY: Please give me a couple of minutes more.

In the system of South Eastern Railway, the revenue generation and contribution from Orissa alone is about 30 per cent. Considering this, I shall expect, and hopefully so, that the hon. Minister of Railways will consider the problems of the Railway system in Orissa this year and he will look into these problems.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to one aspect on Paradip-Haridaspur railway line and the Daitari-Banspani railway system and the second bridge on Mohanai Birupa. This is a conglomeration of the project and unless either one is completed, the whole system cannot give the returns that are expected from the railway system. Moreover, the minerals that are exported through Paradip port and the coal imported for the steel plant through Paradip port are inter-linked with this. The present cost per tonne is Rs. 500 through this system. If we have this Daitari-Banspani line and Paradip-Haridaspur line and the second bridge on Mohandi Birupa, the cost will be reduced to half—that is Rs. 250 per tonne. That enhances the potential of the export and import and the cost reduction for the entire commodities. Therefore, I would urge upon the hon. Minister of Railways regarding the allocation. I would not be saying that the allocation made is not sufficient but I would be saying that to complete this project, it needs more allocation so that immediate returns on the investments made will be coming back to the Railways and the national exchequer.

Sir, I do not know what this abbreviation DEPRVN stands for through which the hon. Minister has allocated about Rs. 110 crore to the Orissa region. It does not exist in the documents.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: It is on Rail Vikas Nigam. It is there in the records.

SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY: Thank you. So, it is a capital fund also. I have my apprehension because last year the BOLT scheme was a failure. I was apprehending that probably it is a system that we have managed there.

The sanction of estimates for Haridaspur-Paradip BG line is yet to be done by the Railway Board. It is pending. I would submit that there has not been a re-appraisal for all the financial allocations that have been sanctioned for

the projects in the whole of the country. But this is the only case in 2001 where the sanctioned railway projects for Orissa have been put to re-appraisal. We are yet to understand as to why this has been done. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the fact that this has been re-appraised and for a major project for that region, you yourself have laid the foundation; but the estimate for that is yet to be sanctioned by the Railway Board.

While concluding, I would submit that Lanjigara Road-Junagada line also needs to be further allocated more funds to complete that work. The gauge conversion for Rupsa-Bangiri Poshi and Naupada-Gunupur and the new line up to Rayagada from Gunupur need to be considered by the hon. Minister. You have sanctioned the PRS at Kendrapara which is yet to be commissioned. Your sanction letter, given one-and-a-half years ago is yet to be executed. Though this House has been provided with the information, your Divisional Railway Manager is yet to take it up.

I will be concluding my speech. The Cuttack-Barangarh line needs your attention for further allocation of funds. You have given a token allocation of Rs. 10,00,000 (ten lakh). The second line for Cuttack needs further enhancement in allocation.

Sir, the frequency of Puri-Ahmedabad Express need to be looked into. Now we have a weekly train to Ahmedabad. A large number of workers are going to Ahmedabad and Surat for their livelihood.

I shall urge upon the hon. Railway Minister that its frequency should be increased to three days on this route so that people going for work can have a scope to travel frequently and more so, a stoppage at Baragarh on that line is also needed. I shall also urge upon you that starting one train from Paradip Port to Howrah should also be considered.

I shall again give very many thanks to hon. Railway Minister on behalf of my party BJD and on behalf of the people of Orissa, for looking into and considering our problems. With these words, I conclude my speech.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Nepal Chandra Das is to lay his speech.

SHRI NEPAL CHANDRA DAS (Karimganj): Sir, I lay my speech on the Table of the House.

*Sir, I want to say about some vital problems in my constituency and problem of the people of South Assam,

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Nepal Chandra Das]

Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, etc. which have already raised in Parliament earlier and also raised in some meetings held by the Hon. Railway Minister with North East MPs. Today again, I am going to repeat the following demands for his kind attention to solve them sympathetically because I did not find in his Budget after going through it and feeling depression. That is why I would like to recall him again to fulfil the following demands at the earliest:

For completion of B.G. line from Lumding to Silchar speedily, approximately estimated cost of project is about Rs. 1500 crores. But you are allotting very small amount in every year. I would like to ask the Hon. Railway Minister how many years will be taken by providing such amount in every year for completion of this B.G. Line? The people of entire South Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura are suffering badly for comfortable train journey and unable to carry their essential commodities through the cheapest train route and compelled to bear higher cost for carrying their goods through road transport. Similarly, H.P.C., Cachar Paper Mill also is bearing excess cost for carrying their finished products for using road transportation, resulting which their production cost is being increased and they are incurring heavy loss for non-availability of train transportation. So, you are fervently requested to increase yearly allocation for completion of the project without wasting time further.

In your Railway Budget Speech, you had mentioned that you have created eight new Railway Divisions but Badarpur Junction is not included within these eight. It is long-standing demand of Barak Valley people to set up a Railway Division at Badarpur Junction which Division is covering Badarpur-Manipur via Silchar, Badarpur-Agartala, Katakhal-Bhairabi and Baraigram-Dullarcherra Railway routes. so in length of the Railway routes, there is sufficient justification to create a Railway Division at Badarpur. For a Railway Division at Badarpur the entire Barak valley people have been agitating by staging *Rasta Roku* and *Rail Roku* but they have been totally deprived from your Budget provision. So you are fervently requested for inclusion Badarpur Junction as Railway Division with your eight Divisions.

Some new Stations on Katakhal-Bhairabi route from Lala Bazar to Bhairabi are functioning on commission basis by engaging a person instead of engaging permanent posting of Assistant Station Masters with the result the Railway is unable to collect proper revenue from the train travellers because the passengers taking advantage of the situation, are paying less amount to the

commission agent without purchasing valid tickets, so you are requested to provide permanent staff to fill the posts for better revenue earnings by the Railways. In this Railway route, Katicherra station may be upgraded from class 'A' category to class 'B' for goods booking facility because Katicherra market is one of the big markets of Hailakaudi District and so many wholesalers come to purchase various raw goods from various places of Barak valley and they are deprived to carry their goods through train for non-availability of booking facility and are compelled to carry their goods through road transport at high cost.

Gauge conversion work for Katakhal-Bhairabi route is not yet started till date. As per your Budget, its estimate cost is Rs. 88.70 crores. Its survey work has been completed in 1998. Now I found in your budget that you sanction is Rs. 1.00 crore in 2002-2003 and Rs. 1.00 crore in 2003-2004. but no work has been executed so far in the last year. If you allocate Rs. 1.00 crore in every year for this project, then about ten years is required for completion of gauge conversion work from Katakhal to Bhairabi. So you are requested to increase the yearly allocation for completion of work within short period.

It is learnt from the local newspaper publication that you are going to close Suprakandi, Bazarghat and Ratalaru Stations and Suprakandi Station has already been locked out by the General Manager, N.F. Railway which are situated in my parliamentary constituency as well as unfortunately the area of Samta Party MLA. For this act, serious repercussion amongst the local people has been brought out and already started agitation against and such decision made by Railway authority. So your intervention in this regard is solicited immediately for withdrawing the order of the General Manger, N.F. Railway, Maligaon.

My long-pending demand was for giving a train at least weekly or bi-weekly from Guwahati to Delhi via Joshidhi considering inconvenience of Satsangi devotees of North East along with other passengers for going to Deoghar and Baidyanath comfortably. Every day there are so many Satsangi devotees and others tourists are going to Deoghar and Baidyanath from N.E. States. So, I shall be highly glad if you kindly provide a train at least bi-weekly from Guwahati to Delhi via Joshidhi.

Gauge conversion for Badarpur-Kumarghat route as announced by Km. Mamata Benerjee when she was Minister of Railways, has been sanctioned from Badarpur to Baraigram but till date no work has been executed so far. Now I have found in your this year's Budget that not any allocation has been made for this particular gauge

conversion work and you have allotted Rs. 75.00 crores from B.G. Line from Lumding to Silchar alignment between Migrendisa-Dittockchera with modification for extension Badarpur-Baraigram, Badarpur-Baraigram is a small portion of Badarpur-Kumarghat Railway route. So you are requested to look into it so that gauge conversion work from Badarpur-Kumarghat route may be created as separate scheme and its allotment should be given separately.

[Translation]

SHRI BHASKARRAO PATIL (Nanded): Sir, I want to put forward my views on the Railway Budget 2003-2004. Keeping in view the time limit, I would like to restrict myself to my constituency only.

Sir, I am a Member of Parliament from the Marathwada region in Maharashtra. Earlier, our Marathwada region used to come under Nizam's State. After independence there are 8 districts in Marathwada and since then no new railway line even of one km. has been placed in these districts so far. It is a great injustice towards Marathwada.

I would like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister Shri Nitish ji towards few important questions of my region. I would like to request to hon'ble Nitish ji that there is our long standing demand that the Nanded Railway Division, which is presently attached to the South Central Railway should be attached to the Central Zone. I have spoken to Nitish ji many times in this regard. I would like to remind you that I had raised this matter in this August House during last session also and you had said that it would be done as soon as possible. I would also like to remind you that I and some other Members of Parliament had met you in Shirdi and in the sacred temple of Shirdi and also in the presence of Press you had given us an assurance that it would be done as soon as possible. We have great respect for Nitish ji. He is not like other Ministers who just give assurances but do not fulfil them. I was confident that the hon'ble Minister would make a reference about this in this Budget. I am hopeful that he will definitely mention about it in his Budget reply. There will not be any economic burden on the Railway separately. What he has to do is that Nanded Railway Division has to be removed from the South Central Railway and it has to be attached with the Central Railway. While connecting it, only one thing has to be done that the 30 km long line of Mudkhed to Dharmawar of Nanded Division and the Parmi-Udgir line of Marathwada has to be connected with Nanded Division. This is our first and foremost demand that the Nanded Division should be attached to the Central Zone.

I express my thanks to Nitish ji that he had set up new Zones in the country on 4th July, 2002. While making Zones, you also set up some new division. I especially thank you for making a Zone in Jaipur for Rajasthan. You have also made Zones in Gorakhpur and Allahabad in Uttar Pradesh. We also welcome you for making a new Zone in Hazipur in Bihar.

15.00 hrs.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our Maharashtra is a highly developing state but it is unfortunate that no new Zone has been made in Maharashtra. Today, Maharashtra is divided into 5 zones and 35% area of Maharashtra comes in the Central Zone, 32% area comes in the South Central Zone which is in Secunderabad (Andhra Pradesh), in Konkan Zone 10%, in the Western Zone 9% and 10% of the area of Maharashtra come in the South Eastern Zone. The people of Maharashtra make an appeal to you that a separate Zone for Maharashtra should be made as you have made Hazipur Zone for Bihar and 2 Zones for Uttar Pradesh. This is the long standing and an important demand of the people of Maharashtra. Shri Manohar Joshi ji, the Speaker of our House and a leader of Shiv Sena and who have been the Chief Minister of Maharashtra and a Minister in the centre is not in the chair at the moment otherwise I am sure that he would have strongly supported my demand and have requested the Railway Minister to look into the matter. I request you that a separate Zone should be made for Maharashtra.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, our second long standing demand is about a railway line from Mutkhed to Adilabad. The work on this line was started during your Ministership and at that time an assurance was given that the work would be completed by 1998. But the way budget allocation is made and the slow spade of the work undertaken, I feel that it will take a long time for its completion. I, therefore, request you to allocate more budget for this rail line and action should be taken to complete this railway line as early as possible.

Sir, our third demand is regarding Purna-Akola-Khandwa railway line. You have started some work on it but the budget allocation is very low. More budget will have to be allocated for this purpose and this railway line should also be completed within 2 years.

Our fourth demand is regarding Udgir-Deglu-Bodhan railway line. About this, it is said that a survey for this railway line was conducted 70 years ago during the time of Nizam king. An assurance was given for the survey of Bodhan-Birvosi-Narsi-Mutkhed-Latur Road railway line. I

[Shri Bhaskarrao Patil]

urge that the assurance given by the Minister should be fulfilled.

Our fourth demand is regarding Mutkhed-Kangar-Latur Road railway line. Though this rail line was approved in the year 2001 but the Railways has not yet started the work on it. I would like to request you to give directions to the Railway Board Officers to start work on it as soon as possible as the sanction has already been given to this line.

Our fifth demand is regarding Dharmavar-Kadlavadi-Birvosi line. It has been discussed many times in the House. More funds should be allocated for it.

Sir, our sixth demand is regarding Parmi-Bidam-Ahmednagar railway line. Funds should also be allocated for this as soon as possible.

Sir, Sachkhand Express runs between Nanded and Amritsar. There is a Gurudwara of Guru Govind Singh in Nanded which is frequented by the Sikh people in large numbers. This train runs five days a week. My request is that it should be run on all the seven days which is very much needed.

Sir, the Nandigram Express was flagged off by the hon'ble Minister in Mumbai. For this, I had expressed my gratitude earlier and now also I express my thanks to you. This train runs upto Kurla terminal. While flagging off this train in Mumbai, you had promised us to extend this train up to Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminal but it has not been extended up to Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminal so far. We have demanded for dunning Nandigram Express upto Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminal right from the beginning. I request that this train should be extended upto Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminal.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, a big festival of Sikh people will be celebrated in Nanded in the year 2008. Around 25 lakh Sikh people from all over the world will assemble there on the occasion of completion of 300 years of the Guru Granth Sahib. I, therefore, request that a new railway station should be constructed at Maktekadi.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, with great concern and responsibility, I would like to tell the hon'ble Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar ji that our Nanded Railway Division comes under South Zone. Our demand to attach it with the Central Zone has made the officers of the South Central Railway very angry. There are 90% Telugu speaking people in our Nanded Division who do not want our Nanded Division to be attached with the Central

Railway. I think that the timing for running of trains like Nandigram Express, Pune Express and Maharashtra Express introduced by these officers have deliberately been fixed in such a way that it is highly inconvenient to the passengers. I also spoke to the local officer there and total him about this conspiracy. There will not be any passengers available if the timings are not right and these officers will report to the Railway Board that this train is not economically viable. I also tried to put this fact before the higher officers of the Railway Board. I request you to inform them about this great conspiracy. You will have to see that none of the trains introduced by you should be taken off. We wish that in the forthcoming Railway Budget you will say something regarding connecting Nanded Railway Division to the Central Zone. A meeting of the members of Congress, Shiv Sena, BJP and Samta Dal was held day before yesterday. Workers of Marathwada region were also present there. All those people made a declaration there. I am not giving you a threat here in anyway. I am telling you very politely that the people from all the parties there declared that if Nanded Railway Division is not connected to the Central Zone. then they will organise a very big agitation in Marathwada from 1st April and that there will be a 'Rail Roko Andolan'. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Nandigram has been connected.

SHRI BHASKARRAO PATIL: I have thanked you for that. I do not want to conceal anything from you as I am an MP from that area. I, therefore, want to put my point before you. I strongly appeal to the hon'ble Minister of Railways that there will not be any economic burden in connecting Nanded Railway Division to the Central Zone. Our whole Marathwada region will welcome your Railway Budget if you make a declaration in your Budget Speech reply. With this, I conclude my speech.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am very grateful to you allowing me to speak.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Now, Shri Denzil B. Atkinson will lay his speech.

All those hon. Members who want to lay their speeches can state so, and lay their speeches on the Table.

SHRI DENZIL B. ATKINSON (Nominated): Sir, I lay my speech.

*Sir, on behalf of the Anglo-Indian community, my colleague and I welcome the Railway Budget presented by Shri Nitish Kumar, Minister for Railway on behalf of the National Democratic Alliance Government led by Prime Minister, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee. Perhaps, there has not been a better Railway Budget presentation for the people of India.

Sir, I do not desire to go into the pros and cons of the budget and take up the valuable time of the House. I am here to plead on behalf of the Anglo-Indians held at Chennai on January 18 and 19, 2003 to commemorate 150 years of Indian at Chennai on January 18 and 19, 2003 to commemorate 150 years of Indian Railways, presided over by my colleague, Dr. Beatrix D'Souza. Both Hon'ble Minister of State, Shri Bandaru Dattatreya and Shri A.K. Moorthy were Chief Guests on the two days and the Community were disappointed not to have your presence. Other pressing issues kept you away and this was realized and for which we do not fault you.

Both Ministers, I am confident, were astonished to take note of the huge turnout at the Perambur Railway Institute the largest Railway Institute anywhere in the country and more specifically the centre for most Anglo-Indian functions around the area. I am not going into what discussions and debates took place at the convention. I am here, as I said earlier, to plead on behalf of the community. Before I make my prayer, let me bring before this 'August House' a few of the heroic deeds of Anglo-Indians who served on Indian Railways.

It is well known that railway quarters adjacent to every major junction and loco shed were mainly occupied by Anglo-Indians. This was due to the fact that very large numbers of the small community were either drivers, firemen, ticket collectors, guards or fitters, Stations Masters etc. it would take quite some time to reflect on the heroic deeds of each of them, hence I shall just speak about some of the more important ones.

I do not speak about the films 'Bhowani Junction' or 'Juli' which chose to screen Anglo-Indians working on the Railways. What these films failed to bring to the notice of the public are the daring achievements by this small community. Where no man dared to enter, the Anglo-Indians just walked in: laying railway lines in such areas infested with poisonous snakes and some wild animals; during the 1960 nation wide railway strike, every Anglo-Indian railway employee was at his or her post, performing duty without fear. I relate a few incidents where the Anglo-Indian driver, risking his own life, saved all passengers on their trains.

Mr. DeMonte, who received praises from all his upserious for his safety and punctuality while driving the 1 Dn Mangalore Express, DeMonte complained of chest pain. He ended his last trip with his hand on the brake lever, by sheer will power. The moment he stepped out of the foot-plate, he collapsed and was declared dead on arrival at the hospital. But he saved the lives of all the passengers on the train. This had been noted by a serving General Manager on the Southern Railways, Mr. V. Anand.

Johanns, who was awarded the Ashoka Chakra, while driving got the firebox of the locomotive blow back and he took the full blast of the terrific heat as it surged out of the furnace. His assistants leapt clear, leaving him alone. Badly burnt and now totally blind, he realized that if the train went on it must crash, killing all the passengers. With flesh sliding off his bones, his whole body was on fire, yet his hands or whatever remained of them, reached blindly out and brought the vacuum brake down and the train groaned to a halt. Doing the driver's duty to inform the guard he clambered out to do this. He did not reach a hospital alive.

Another Ashok Chakra awardee, Percy Carroll, driving the Bombay Mail was picking up speed outside his home station on being given the all-clear signal. Suddenly he spotted an obstruction on the line, caused by the collision of two goods trains. He knew that death was imminent, not only for himself but for everyone on the train: he forced his mates to jump off and said that he would save the train. And that he did. He brought down the vacuum but it was a fraction too late for the intrepid driver. The engine carried on by its own momentum leaped the rails and spilled over on the embankment. Carroll was pinned under it, his leg crushed beneath steel—later amputated and he fought two days for his life. He died in extreme suffering but with knowledge that all the passengers and his crew mates were safe. Thousands of people attended his funeral regardless of caste and creed. I could relate the courage of others such as Driver Lloyd Clements in 1960 during the devastating Orissa floods; the dare of driver Basil James in whose memory stands James Bridge on the Bilaspur section of the south Eastern Railway; three Mcfarlane brothers all on the Postal Express lost their lives across the Mangapatnam Bridge on the Madras-Bombay Line section. Even today every inspecting official and railway man passing the bridge usually stop for a short while to offer a floral tribute and silent prayer. Some others who triumphed in their assignments were shunter Charles Cantopher, guard Brian Edwards; fireman George Mantell. Stories of unsung Anglo-Indian railway men could fill a volume on the shelves of 'Forgotten Railway-men'.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Denzil B. Atkinson]

Sir, indeed there are quite a good number of such railway men who laid down their lives while saving the passengers on their trains. But considering the numbers from the Anglo-Indian community on the railways, let me say that these employees were fated to be involved in unforeseen accidents yet stood their posts in the face of death.

I do not wish to speak on the several Anglo-Indian railway sportsmen who excelled chiefly in our national game, hockey. No Anglo-Indian became a rich man out of long year of service put in on the railways. Hundreds spent years away from their families in the wilds, many died. But today with a job reservation quota based on caste our young people find it impossible to enter the railways. Can a nation forget the contribution of this microscopic community to Indian Railways.

Sir, through you, I plead with the Government and the Minister of Railways to provide a quota, however small, for this brave community.

[Translation]

DR. (SHRIMATI) SUDHA YADAV (Mahendragarh) Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir thank you. I would like to express my gratitude to the Minister of Railways for presenting this budget keeping in mind the interests of the people. This budget takes into account all the questions as how to face the future challenges, how to provide efficient management, how to get better results, how to ensure passenger safety, etc. I would also like to thank for starting National Railway Development Scheme as announced by the Prime Minister on 15th August, 2002 under which emphasis has been laid on how to strengthen 'Golden Quadrilateral Scheme'. There is a scheme to connect fast rail routes with ports. I think the construction of four major bridges as proposed in budget will definitely lead to the development of entire country. Minister of Railways has not burdened the passengers and has made no increase in freight despite the fact that Railways in incurring loses in passenger and transportation traffic. He has reiterated his commitment of providing public facilities. He has done it by way of expanding public facilities already availed by senior citizens, cancer patients, heart patients, people suffering from kidney disorder. Even facilities availed by journalists have been expanded in the budget. It has also been stated in the budget to provide more facilities in Janashatabdi trains introduced last year in many regions for the convenience of public. The proposal made by you to Indian Oil for encouraging bio-diesel is commendable. It will enable us to succeed in facing the future challenges as well as the problem of

environment. I would like to thank that for the first time a project has been started by the Railways for Srinagar valley. It is in accordance with national interest and important from strategic point of view and it is a historic work. For this the Government deserves commendation.

Hon. Minister has tried to make this budget practical and appropriate from business point of view. In the entire budget he has laid emphasis on providing facilities to the common public. Through you, Sir I would like to say that you have implemented many new projects and have made announcement to introduce new trains and undertake the work of gauge conversion. But being a public representative I would also like to put before you the demands of the public.

1510. hrs.

(SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV *in the Chair*)

As I told that you have tried to rationalise this budget and many other hon. Members have also accepted it. But through you, Sir I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Railways to a point that you have ignored Haryana while preparing rail budget and if you see the budget of last 2-3 years no mention has been made of Haryana in them. You have visited Haryana many a times. You had made many points to the people there while speaking from different political fara, we through those points might figure in this budget but they were not included in the budget. My constituency falls in National capital region. A demand for running a DMU train between Rewari and Delhi has been made many a times. Many daily passengers and business class people come here, every day for employment and work respectively. When you visited Rewari you had announced that since rail route was very busy on broad gauge, you would run the first D.M.U. of the country on meter gauge line. That train has been brought there. The work has also been started but I have come to know that you are shifting it to some other part of the country. You are aware of the public sentiments I would like to request that you must act upon the announcement of running the above train which you had made to the public at Rewari.

There may be various reasons for the decline in the number of passengers but I would like to cite one reason in this regard. As per Ministry of Railways a D.M.U. Train has been run between Delhi-Rawari on a broad gauge. I am not aware of it and even common public is also not aware of it because a train by the name of Kalindi Express that used to run earlier has now been discontinued. A train has been introduced on the same time with new coloured compartments and engine. In

National Capital Region thousand of people commute to Delhi everyday for employment on Delhi-Rewari, Faridabad-Delhi, Sonipat-Delhi, Ghaziabad-Delhi, Meerut-Delhi routes and to me, it does not sound logical if we run trains from Delhi to Rewari, Delhi to Meerut in the morning. Their timings should be fixed in such a way that the commuters may easily avail of the facility.

Secondly, I want to say that there are many such places in the country where over-bridges are required. There are many much needed bridges which have not been completed due to non availability of resources with State Government and lack of cooperation from them. You have funds under this head with you. I demand you to make some amendments in the rules for a few such important bridges and make arrangement in such a way that maximum assistance may be provided from you side in the construction of over-bridges on State Highways or on the place with heavy traffic.

The second important thing is that Rewari-Rohtak line was sanctioned at various forum in Haryana. As per my information you have forwarded it for further necessary action but the people of Haryana are disappointed to note that there is no provision for the same in the present budget. I would like to request you to keep these demands in mind while making the reply on the budget. Besides, I would also apprise you of the demands made by the people.

I would like to remind you that Rewari is the biggest junction in respect of meter-gauge line. The rate of development continue to increase higher and higher. We talked about development everywhere but kept on forgetting this biggest junction. I would like to say that a number of trains pass through all the directions of this state but a meter-gauge line still exists in this area which is just 100 kms. away from the capital city of our country, Delhi. No doubts this area is connected with the capital of the country by railway line but we don't consider it to be so connected as there is no stoppage for the trains.

I would like to request you to rectify the problems that have left out unattended with regard to the state of Haryana. Haryana is such a state, which surrounds the capital of the country from three sides. We give our co-operation to Delhi with regard to the security aspect. Besides, we extend help by other means also. When the issue of providing rail service to that state is raised, everybody says that the area is accessible by road. I would like to say that there is a need for you to improve the rail route for the benefit of the daily passengers.

Today, Gurgaon marks its presence in the world map. A number of renowned companies have set-up their offices there. A issue was raised for the electrification of railway line between Delhi and Gurgaon. It was also mentioned in the last budget but if we take a look on the funds that have been allocated for this propose, we'll find that there is no possibility of completion of this job in many years to come. Therefore, this amount should be increased.

At present, work relating to National Highway is being undertaken. Express Highways are also being constructed. Due to this, the movement of traffic between Delhi and Gurgaon has become very congested. I hope that you'll solve this problem by improving the railway route.

At the end, I would like to thank you for this precise budget, a quite proper, practical and trade-oriented budget that have been made for the betterment of common people.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri P.S. Gadhvi, if you want to lay your speech, you kindly do so.

[English]

*SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch): I support Railway Budget and congratulate Hon. Nitish Kumarji for presenting people's friendly and at the same time, growth oriented Railway Budget.

Sir, in this Budget Railway Minister has particularly taken care for passengers and goods traffic. In our country, Railways is still the only communication network for poor and middle class people for short and long distance journey. Without Railway we cannot think of India's development and it we want to continue this development motion then it is very much necessary to strengthen railway as much as we can. Keeping this in mind Railway Minister has brought such good Budget.

I express my gratitude to Hon. Prime Minister and Railway Minister for giving us broad gauge railway facility upto Bhuj in my constituency, i.e. Kutch district which is much underdeveloped and a border district. I also thank Hon. Railway Minister for increasing frequency of Hazrat Alla Express, direct train from Delhi to Naya Bhuj from two to four train in a week.

Sir, looking to heavy traffic of deviance personnel, I request Hon. Railway Minister to make this train daily which will also be much useful to passengers travelling to North India from my Constituency. Sir, I would like to invite the attention of Hon. Railway Minister that as he

[Shri P.S. Gadhavi]

know that Gujarat is proficing more than 70% of salt in our country, and out of which more than 60% of salt is produced in my constituency, i.e. Kutch. In my constituency, we are not having any industry worth its name. Main salt producing district in Gujarat are Kutch, Rajkot, Surendranagar, Jamnagar, Bhavnagar and Banaskantha. Main source of earning for people in my constituency is working in salt producing units, because agriculture activities has suffered very heavily there due to continuous drought as we are facing consequently third year of drought.

Sir, in my constituency alone, more than 35000 poor agricultural and other labourers are dependent on salt producing units. But due to unbearable 135% hike of Railway freight on edible salt most of the salt units are on the verge of closure and labourers are facing threat of unemployment and starvation. Many submissions and representations have been submitted to Prime Minister, Dy. Prime Minister, Commerce Minister, Hon'ble Railway Minister, Chairman Railway Board, Member Traffic, Chief Minister of Gujarat State.

People concerned with salt industries are agitating this issue since last one year. They have stage agitations but I am sorry to say that in this Railway Budget demand of review of unprecedented hike in railway freight on edible salt has not been considered.

I would like to invite attention of Hon. Railway Minister towards Paras 88 and 89 of his speech on last year's Railway Budget for the year 2002-2003 on 26.02.2002 in which he had stated that while rationalizing the freight structure, he reduced number of classes from 59 to 32, for various commodities and he announced that edible salt, gur-shakkar, foodgrains, organic manures etc. were proposed to be carried at the lowest class 90.

Sir, in his speech he had also mentioned that such increase in Railway freight on edible salt and other commodities which were covered under class 90 would not materially affect the common man. But, Sir, I am sorry to say that unprecedented and unbearable 135% hike in Railway freight on edible salt has adversely and very badly affected the salt producers of Gujarat State and more than 1 lakh poor labourers who are getting directly and indirectly their livelihood from salt industry.

Sir, due to this unprecedented 135% hike in Railway freight on edible salt, this salt industry in Gujarat is facing threat of closure and in turn more than one lakh poor labourers connected with this industry are under constant threat of loosing their jobs. Sir, due to consequent third

year of drought in many parts of salt producing units in Gujarat, these labourers have already lost their jobs and they are facing starvation situation. Sir, I fail to understand any logic or reason as to how the salt which is the cheapest and very common edible commodity for everyone can be equated with the costlier edible items, viz. Gur, shakkar, foodgrains, pulse organic manures etc. In the transportation of salt by train, this commodity normally being loaded and transported in full racks and thus, thousands of racks are required to transport salt. Thus, movement of salt being measured in lakhs of tonnes while all other commodities which fall under class 90 cannot be said to be transported in lakhs of tonnes.

Secondly, when any trader desires to transport salt by racks, he has to give undertaking to the Railway that he would not put any claim for loss from railway and railway authorities also insist such undertakings from salt transporters. While, in other commodities, namely, gur, shakkar, foodgrains, etc., Railway also takes responsibility of any loss incurred during transit.

From my constituency alone, average daily three racks of salt being transported to North-east and Assam, West Bengal, etc. So, edible commodity like salt cannot be equated with costlier edible items, namely, gur, shakkar, foodgrains, etc.

Sir, this problem has assumed very much seriousness for my constituency in Kutch District and the same deserves to be resolved before it goes beyond control.

Further, I urge Railway Minister through you, Sir, to allow us one more Direct fast train between Naya-Bhuj to Mumbai because at present all trains between Mumbai and Naya Bhuj are going full and always having long waiting list.

Sir, more than 6 to 7 lakh Kutch people from my constituency are settled in Mumbai for their business. Sir, I request Hon. Railway Minister to take up gauge conversion project between Naya-Bhuj and Naliya because near Naliya our air force is having one of the most important air force base. Therefore, from defence point of view, this project assumes much importance and top priority.

I express my thanks to Hon. Prime Minister, Railway Minister and Government of India for giving top priority and starting construction of very important gauge conversion project between Palanpur and Gandhidham. Sir, when this will be completed, it will certainly help shorten the distance between our capital Delhi and major Port Kandla.

Lastly, I request through you, Sir, to Railway Minister to consider the most genuine demand of review of the unprecedented 135% hike in railway freight on edible salt and restore this freight as it was existing prior to last year's Railway Budget.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAMPAL SINGH (Domariaganj): Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget. This budget has been prepared by the Government of the Honourable Atal Bihari Vajpayee, keeping in view the importance of the Railways because the poor people generally travel by train and they find it cheaper and better to carry goods through railways. I am thankful to the honourable Railways Minister for not increasing the fares and freights in the budget.

I am in Lok Sabha since 1991 and since then I am after the conversion of Gorakhpur-Gonda railway line. This project was included in the Railway Budget for the year 1997-98 but no work could be started on this project. Last year on 7th June honourable Railway Minister laid the foundation stone at my parliamentary district Siddharthnagar for the gauge conversion and the work on this line commenced. I am particularly thankful to the honourable Railway Minister because unless and until the gauge conversion is done there would not be a direct train for Lucknow, Mumbai, Kolkata from Siddharthnagar till now. As the gauge conversion work could not be taken up this district remained no industries district and as such there are no factories here. The Cement, steel and fertilizers are transported from District Basti through trucks.

Since this district is connected with Nepal, the passengers for Delhi, who travel from Sonali to Delhi by bus would be able to travel by train after the gauge conversion work is completed. Lakhs of foreign tourists, followers of Budha religion, visit Kapilvastu, Lumbini the pilgrimages of Budha religion every year. Recently the Railway Minister order to conduct the survey for laying of Railway line from Naugarh to Lumbini. With this Lumbini will be connected with Budha circuit and there will be direct trains from here to all the Mentor cities resulting to the development of tourism in this region. This will also encourage in setting up of industries in this area, thus, this area will be developed.

Some main features of this budget are as follows. In this budget, a mention has been made to fill up 20000 posts of group 'D', which will provide employment to people. Special case has been taken towards Railway security which will lessen the railway accidents. There is

*Speech was laid on the Table.

a proposal of gauge conversion of 775 k.m. of railway lines. The frequency of 50 trains has been increased, 24 trains have been extended, the fares of trains like Rajdhani and Shatabdi express have been decreased. Chief General Manager has been empowered to make changes in the matter of freights.

Through you, Sir, I demand the railway Minister to expedite the work of gauge conversion so that the general public would get more and more benefit and the government's fund spent, can be recovered at the earliest. By this gauge conversion Gorakhpur-Gonda will get an additional railway line. The doubling of Gonda-Gorakhpur line has not been taken up so far.

The work of connecting Navgarh to Lumbini my be taken up so that we may get money from other countries like Japan Maltri Singh' and this work would be completed earlier.

The railway line is passing through the District headquarters Siddharthnagar resulting to which the city is divided into two parts. When the Railway crossing is closed it causes great inconvenience to the public, so an overbridge may be constructed.

A way from the city side of Siddharthnagar to reach to the platform of the railway station may be constructed. Similar way may also be constructed from the other side also so that it will facilitate the passengers boarding the train, while the railway crossing is closed.

The length of the platform No. 1 of Basti railway station is short with the result it does not cover the train like Vaishali Express fully. Earlier also I have written letters requesting the Railway Minister to extend this platform because it causes great difficulty to old persons and heart patients who had to cross the over-bridge to board the trains. We have been told that this work will be done at the earliest but the work has not been commenced till date. Work of the extension of platform No. 1 at Basti Railway Station may be taken up at the earliest so that important train like Vaishali Express can halt there.

[English]

SHRI K. MALAISAMY (Ramanathapuram): Sir, keeping the time constraint of the chair and paucity of time, I am inclined to make my presentation as briefly as possible.

While doing so, I would divide my presentation into three parts. (i) what has been committed in the Budget; (ii) what has been omitted in the Budget and (iii) what could have been done in the Budget.

[Shri K. Malaisamy]

These are the three areas in which I will dilate and divulge, for the consideration of the hon. Minister. In this context, I am reminded of the famous couplet of *Thirukkural*, which is more than 2,000 years old, namely:

*"Gunam Nadi Kuttram Nadi Avatrrul
Migainadi Mikka Kollal."*

That means, to assess or to make a decision, one should gauge the pulses and minuses of any issue and clean towards what is more. In pursuance of that process, I like to analyse the Budget of the hon. Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumarji. It has got the highlights and hits on the one side and at the same time, it has got some misses, pits and depressions on the other. That is why, some of the hon. Members, who spoke earlier to me, have hailed the Budget and some other have wailed the Budget.

It is true that the Railway Minister has hit the headlines for more than one reason. To start with, he has not touched the fare structure of passenger fare and the freight rates. Secondly, he has offered discounts. Thirdly, he has kept in mind the regional aspirations by introducing as many as 50 new express trains. He has increased the frequency of 13 trains, and has extended as many as 24 trains. In this way he is able to meet the aspirations of the regional people.

He has declared this year as the 'customer satisfaction year'. Not only that, he has rationalised the fare structure and the freight structure. He has given concessions to various categories of patients which have been ailing. He has not forgotten the senior citizens and has reduced the minimum age for availing benefit. So, I hasten to join my other colleagues who have appreciated the Budget.

But after a critical analysis and an in-depth study of the Budget, I could see that between the balance of the expectation of the people on the one side, and the needs of the organisation on the other, the Minister of Railways has rightly—as any other Minister of Railways could do—preferred to pamper the public or the common people. In that process, knowingly or unwittingly what has been done is that a great injustice has been done to the institution, namely, the Railways. What I am trying to say is that the financial health and wealth of the Railways would receive a set back by showing this kind of gesture. Not only that, it is not an objective business proposition also. What had been tried last year to set right the imbalance between the freight charges and passenger fares, has now been discontinued. With the result, the net accrual

of the revenue for the Railways will come down. You will be surprised to hear that last year the accrual was 36.4 per cent. As against this, now the net accrual is only 10.8 per cent. This does not speak well of the Railways' future.

Coming to another issue, while making a Budget, they will normally make a lot of assumptions. But as far as possible the assumptions should be realistic and should be achievable. What has been assumed here is that there is a decline in the number of passengers. I am not able to understand this observation. How could the number of passengers come down when the population is increasing like anything and the prosperity is increasing? So, how could there be a decrease of 2.8 per cent in the number of passengers? If there is going to be a decrease in the number of passengers, will it not warrant a re-look whether your rationalisation is in order? This is the point I want to make.

I am happy to see that you have not increased the freight charges and the passenger fares. But it should not be a total non-hike affair.

On the other hand you could have been selective in the non-like on making concessions in fares for the short distance trains as the bus operators could be the competitors for the Railways. Depending upon the competition on the short distance travel, you could have made the concessions. In case of long-distance trains the Railways could have got a reasonable increase and that would have helped in increasing the revenue of the Railways.

Now, coming to the passenger traffic, it has been projected that there will be a decrease in the travelling public. But 50 new trains are being proposed to be introduced and the frequency increased and a few trains extended. If that be the case, how do you feel that it is going to be remunerative? The travelling public, according to you, is giving to come down and then, what is the use of introducing more and more trains? In that event, the losses for the Railways would go up and losses would accumulate. This would aggravate the situation.

Sir, I am not against growth of employment. Growth of employment is most welcome as far as I am personally concerned. But your philosophy and policy now is different from your earlier stand of down sizing manpower. The Railways propose to recruit as many as 20,000 people in the fourth grade and 3500 people in the RPF. That means it is going to be a permanent commitment for the Railways. What would happen if so many people are

recruited? By recruiting 20,000 plus 3,500 people's the Railways are not going to increase the profitability. Nor to increase the operational efficiency. You are going to recruit them for the purposes of ensuring safety and such other things. It is certainly a permanent commitment for the Railways. Instead of going in for fresh recruitment, the Railways could think of re-deployment of some surplus persons from elsewhere and they could be better utilised. This is my suggestion. The Railways could think of considering this.

Sir, it is with a very great agony and anguish and also with all seriousness I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that there has been a notable omission in the Railway Budget as far as the State of Tamil Nadu is concerned. The sanctioning of a Division for Salem has been much talked about but nothing has been done. The Railway Minister has proposed the introduction of a number of new trains but there are no trains for the southern districts of Tamil Nadu. There has also been no mentioned about the electrification of the Villivakkam-Annanagar sector. Above all, the total expenditure of the Railways on development also has come down.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now. One more Member from your party also wants to speak.

SHRI K. MALAISAMY: Sir, other Members have been allowed 20 to 30 minutes. I have just started. One should be considerate. I am sorry to say that the Chair should be considerate. I need another five to seven minutes.

Sir, this is not the first occasion that I am saying this. I made this representation several times to the hon. Railway Minister. We all Members of Parliament from the State of Tamil Nadu went and presented our case before the Railway Minister. Though there is a Minister of State for Railways from the State of Tamil Nadu who has been very active and is making an all-out effort to go all around the places, yet he does not have enough resources. What can he do when he does not have the resources? The Railway Ministry should allocate more funds to him so that he can work more actively. He cannot do anything if he does not have enough resources.

Sir, to be honest, nothing has been done in terms of new lines and conversion of meter gauge lines into broad gauge lines. In T.N., several projects have been sanctioned some five years back. But the Railways have allocated meager sums like rupees five crore or rupees two crore for projects wanting hundreds of crores. Against a project cost of Rs. 250 crore, if a sum of rupees five crore or rupees two crore is sanctioned, then would it

not take 25 years to complete that project? I am very particular about the broad gauge conversion of railway lines. A great regional imbalance is there in this regard as far as the State of Tamil Nadu is concerned. In all other parts of the country, nearly 89 per cent of all meter gauge lines have been converted into broad gauge lines. Whereas in Tamil Nadu, eighty per cent of meter gauge lines are yet to be converted to broad gauge lines. You are not the only Railway Minister responsible for this anomaly. It is a legacy carried over for several years. At least you could, in your tenure, think of setting right the imbalance, to do something concrete by allocating the finances in large measure, so that this kind of imbalance is removed.

To cite a striking example, the President of India, His Excellency Dr. Abdul Kalam, hails from Rameswaram. Suppose he wants to go by rail from Delhi to Rameswaram, he cannot go because Rameswaram is not connected by broad gauge at all. From Chennai one cannot go straight to Rameswaram by B.G. There are two on going projects here (1) Madurai (Manamadurai) to Rameswaram (ii) Tiruchi to Manamadurai. Both these lines have to be completed. Kindly think of whether the native place of the President of India and the famous pilgrim centre is connected by broad gauge soon.

Coming to another general issue again, you are going to lose about 30 per cent of freight to roads. That means, roads are going to take 30 per cent of your business. If that be the case, what is your policy initiative and what is your action plan to see that this 30 per cent business is not lost to roads?

My task will not be complete unless I give some concrete suggestions for the improvement and the generation of railway funds. As far as the Railways are concerned, can you think of diversification measures by laying fibre optic telephones along with railway track? This is one of the very important areas that you can think of getting some substantial revenue. Secondly, you have got lot of surplus lands at umpteen number of places. You can think of commercialisation of this kind of surplus land in order to earn some income. You can also think of exploiting the export market for your locomotives and wagons. You can ensure transparency and accountability in the functioning of bureaucracy. I am told that the number of ticketless passengers are in plenty. You can think of launching some special drive to curb this trend.

[Shri K. Malaisamy]

Finally, when I came from my house to the Parliament today, I could see a Delhi Police vehicles bearing a slogan 'With you-For you-Always'. This is a very good concept that they have developed. I would like to know whether you are also with the public—for the public—always is it going to be always or only till the elections. Yours is a service organisation. Please see whether it is an equitable service, whether it is an adequate service; whether it is a timely service, whether it is continuous service, whether it is an efficient service and whether it is an economic service. Let me now conclude.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Bhuria ji, you had asked for permission to lay your speech on the Table of the House. You may lay your speech on the Table of the House.

SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA (Jhabua): I am laying my speech on the Table of the House.

*SHRI SURESH CHANDEL (Hamirpur, Himachal Pradesh): Sir, you have given me an opportunity to express my views on Railway Budget and I am very thankful to you for that.

In this budget the Minister of Railways has not put an additional burden on any class; on the contrary he has provided many concessions which will benefit all section of people. Today, every section of people in the country is satisfied with this railway budget.

Sir, the Hon. Minister has reduced by five years the age of those senior citizen who can get concessional tickets. Now it is 60 years instead of 65 years Concession has been provided on the travel of ill person and the journalists. There is no increase in freight charges of petroleum goods; many new trains have been introduced; the destination of many trains have been extended any the freight charges of petroleum goods; many new trains have been introduced; the destination of many trains have been extended and the freight charges of newspapers have been reduced.

Sir, the most important and commendable aspect of this budget is that a determination has been expressed to connect Kashmir by rail in a phased manner by expediting the work.

Sir, the hon. Minister is well aware that during 50 years of independence, as far of Railways is concerned, Himachal Pradesh has got little. It is as good as zero

expansion. If we calculate the money spent on expansion of Railways during the past, the share of Himachal Pradesh would be in billion rupees but only few crores of rupees have been spent in Himachal Pradesh. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards removing wiping out the injustice done with Himachal Pradesh in the field of Railways and towards providing more Railway facilities by spending less money.

A decision was taken in the year 1973 to construct a broad gauge line of about 80 kilometre from Una to Nangal in Himachal Pradesh and even the work was started at that time but only 16 kilometre track has been constructed so far. An allocation of seven crore rupees and eight crore rupees was made in the year 1998-99 and 1999-2000 respectively. The construction of the rail line from Una to Churdu in progress but the speed of work is very slow due to meager allotment of fund. Only 16 kilometre track has been constructed in about 25 years. If the pace of allocation of funds remained the same, it will take another 100 years to complete it. So I request that more and more funds should be allocated immediately to expedite the construction of this line so that people can be benefited by this line and revenue of railways may be increased.

Even this year only 12 crores rupees have been allocated for the construction of this rail line. This amount is like a drop in the ocean. I request that at least this amount must be doubled.

To start the construction of Bilaspur Bhanupalli Rail Line, earlier Satluj Valley Railway Corporation was set up with the assistance of the State Government, cement companies and the Ministry of Railway for the construction of this Railway line, which has now become extinct. The survey of this railway line was conducted by ERCON and now construction work is to be carried out by the Ministry of Railways. The State Government is ready to extend its cooperation in this regard. A lot of cement stone is available around Bilaspur, for that reason ACC Cement and Ambuja Cement Factories have been established in that region and many private factories are in the process of setting up themselves there. I request you that the adequate fund should be allocated in the budget of this year so as to start the construction work of the said line.

Sir, Nalagarh is situated just 40 Km away from Kalka, which is a approximately a plain area. It is the largest industrial area of Himachal Pradesh where large number of industries are already setup. If this big industrial area is connected to Kalka via Nalagarh then railway can generate a lot of revenue and the lower areas of Himachal

*Speech was laid on the Table.

Pradesh may also get a lot of railway facilities. Industries can have convenience of carrying goods from one place to another.

As you know Himachal Pradesh has been the ancient and historic place of deities. Lakhs of people visit Jwala Devi from country and abroad every year. They face a lot of inconvenience due to lack of railway facilities there. Narrow gauge railway line already exists from Pathankot to Jogendra Nagar. If this railway line is extended for 16 km more upto world famous Jawala Devi pilgrimage via Ranital, alongwith income to railways, it will be a heavenly boon for the passengers of entire country. Likewise if Jawala Mukhi is connected to Dhyotsiddh pilgrimage of ancient origin then it will be very beneficial not only to Himachal Pradesh but to every visitor from nook and corner of the country. The old and sick passengers, who face a lot of problems during road transportation will be able to travel by train.

There is a very old pilgrimage of Goddess Shri Naina Devi jee situated in district Bilaspur where lakhs of pilgrims visit yearly to have a Darshana (glimpse) of Goddess. This place can be easily connected with Anandpur Sahib by constructing only 15-20 Kilometers of railway line. Nearly 8 lakh pilgrims visit Shri Naina Devi jee and Jwalamukhi jee yearly. Railway can earn big amount of revenue with minimum expenditure and Himachal can avail the rail facility.

My suggestion is that some coaches should be attached to Himachal Express and be brought upto Ambala and they should be further attached to the train bound for Haridwar, then people of Himachal Pradesh can easily avail the rail facility of visiting upto Haridwar. This suggestion of mine is very useful and important but for some unknown reason railway board has rejected it. I suggest to reconsider it. After the demise of their beloved ones, the large number of people of Himachal Pradesh visit Haridwar to perform their last rites and dispensation of their ashes. But they face a lot of problems due to absence of railway route. So this proposal may please be accepted immediately.

Sir, Panwata Sahib situated in district Sirmour of Himachal Pradesh is very ancient, famous and sacred pilgrimage of sikhism, where lakhs of sikh tourists from whole of the country come for pilgrimage. This place has been the penance place of Guru Govind Singh. If rail reservation facility is made available here it will facilitate old pilgrims in visiting this pilgrimage.

Local people have been demanding to have a stoppage of Jammu-Haridwar rail line at Kathuwa for a long time.

One gate at railway crossing must be constructed at Kangra Valley meter gauge rail line near Trippal village. There are villages on the both sides of rail line where thousands of families reside. Because of absence of gate at railway crossing villages face a lot of problem while carrying their heavy luggage. So that construction of gate at railway crossing has become an absolute necessity.

A railway crossing should be made at Nandpur Bhatoli on Pathankot-Jogendra Nagar Narrow Gauge Rail section. Even earlier I have been emphasizing, villagers reside in large numbers on the both sides of rail line and they face a lot of problems while ferrying out domestic goods for the want of railway crossing, so the railway crossing must be constructed but I have to say with regret that so far Ministry of Railway has been ignoring this justified demand on the pretext of the paucity of funds as well as depositing some money by State Government.

Sir, in the last I thank you for giving me a chance to speak. I support the railway budget and request to Mr. Minister and hope that he will take immediate action for solving problems, highlighted by me.

[English]

*SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL (Joynagar): Sir, I rise to speak on the Rail Budget for 2003-04. The Hon'ble Rail Minister Shri Nitish Kumarji has presented a very clever budget. He has not forgotten electoral politics. The coming assembly elections later this year are foremost in his mind. This can be said at best an election-oriented budget. He has not increased the rail fares and freight. This is a very welcome step. Atleast in view of the elections the common man would not be further burdened.

Sir, we have seen in the recent days rail accidents are on the increase. The rail tracks are very old. They need renewal. Funds are necessary for their renovation and maintenance. The passengers' security should be given top priority. Of course, the Minister, who is a well-meaning person, is concerned about the increasing accidents. But he is doing very little. He has allocated some funds for the passengers' safety. But his is not enough. The Rail Minister should see that the passengers' safety under no circumstances is jeopardised.

While not compromising with passengers' safety efforts should be made for increasing the rail network. There have been repeated demands to complete the ongoing rail projects in various parts of the country. But they linger on. It takes not less than ten years for the completion of the rail projects. I shall deal with them in the subsequent parts of speech how the ongoing rail

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Sanat Kumar Mandal]

projects have been delayed. This happens not only in my constituency but throughout the country. Meanwhile the cost escalates. as a result the Government has to allocate more money. The Government should see that the projects completed as early as possible. This is essential.

Secondly the punctuality of trains. On the punctuality of trains the less said is better. The trains always run late. This causes hardships to the passengers. This should be avoided at any cost. Government should give emphasis on punctuality, cleanliness and security. These three are utmost important for the Railways.

Now, Sir I will focus my attention on cleanliness aspect. the toilets in the trains are very dirty. Even conditions of the toilets in the AC class not better. About the platform and stations everyone know the conditions. Even the stations at metropolitan cities are not better. Instructions should be given to maintain the cleanliness at the stations. An operation cleanliness drive should be launched for the purpose. Even the passengers should be made aware of the maintenance of cleanliness at the rail stations and platforms.

Complaints have many times received about the quality of food served in the sleeper class. The amount the catering staff charge is not proportionate with the quality of foods. Therefore the Rail Ministry should take measures for improving the quality of foods so that they are satisfied with food. There is another demand for providing a doctor in the long distance trains. This is important. Sometimes if a passenger is taken ill there is no one to attend to him. We have to see this aspect is not neglected.

Now, Sir, I turn my attention to some of the problems and demands of my area Sundarbans.

Sir, I now turn my attention towards some of the problems of the Railway passengers in Sealdah.

I regret to say that once again the Railway Minister has done total injustice to this region. I now give two specific examples. For doubling of Sonarpur-Canning (Phase I) the Railway Minister has allocated only Rs. 1 crore for the year 2003-04. Last year's budget he has given the same amount. Similarly for the Baraipur-Laxmikantapur the Railway Minister has again allocated Rs. 1 crore. Sir, these doubling projects are of utmost importance. But they are being neglected. At such a rate the two projects would taken ten years for completion.

Before the Rail Minister presented his budget I had written to the Rail Minister about the various problems of the Sundarban areas. The Minister is aware that Canning Rail Station is called the gateway to Sundarbans. But there is no reservation facility for the long distance trains at Canning. A large number of tourists come to Sundarbans. But there is no waiting room at the Canning Station. There are no toilet facilities at the station. Even the security problem is there. There are danger from anti-social elements. I had indicated to this the Minister several times. But not any action has been taken on a single issue.

This type of attitude towards the problem of the Sundarbans would certainly by counter productive. I hope the Minister will take some corrective measures during the course of his reply. With this I conclude my speech and thank you for giving me this opportunity.

[Translation]

*SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA (Jhabua): Sir, Ministry of Railways had conducted a survey to lay the 316 km. long Maxi-Dahod railway line which is a very important one passing through my Parliamentary constituency Jhabua-Ratlam. Thereafter, the Railway Ministry allocated small sums for this purpose over a period of time. The construction of this railway line will promote industrialisation and generate employment opportunities in adivasi dominated areas in Jhabua and the adjacent areas. It would provide railway facility to the people of adivasi districts of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat and a new era will begin with the availability of means of development and employment opportunities in this area. The work on Dahod, Indore and Devas-Maksi sections of this railway line is being done in a phased manner. Railway Ministry had announced that this work would be completed within the next two years. However, as the required funds for this purpose are not being released in the Railway Budgets, the timely completion of the work seems to be impossible. In the Railway Budget for 2003-04 only Rs 20 crores has been allocated for this railway line which creates doubts about the willingness of the Government for the early completion of this railway line. The Railway Ministry has time and again mentioned about the work being done on Dahod, Indore and Devas-Maxi sections in a phased manner, but no mention has been made for the route of this railway line passing thorough Indore, Dhar, Sardarpur and Jhabua. I want to know by when the action would be taken regarding the construction of railway line on these remaining sections. The estimated cost of this railway line (as per the pink book 1998-1999) was Rs. 297.14

*Speech was laid on the Table.

crores. Due to the slow pace of construction of this railway line, its estimated cost has gone up to Rs. 900 crores which is more than three times three actual estimated cost. At the end of the year 1999-2000, the estimated expenditure was only Rs. 21.09 crores. Surprisingly, the budget allocation of only Rs. 10 crore, Rs. 20 crore and Rs. 20 crores in the years 2000-2001, 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 respectively is just like a drop in the ocean.

Sir, I myself have met the hon. Prime Minister on 19th February, 2003 and while making him aware of this fact, requested him to allocate Rs. 2000 crore in this years Budget for the early completion of Maxi-Godhara railway line. He had given an assurance that appropriate action to allocate sufficient funds in this years railway Budget for the construction of this railway line would be taken. It is really unfortunate that the work regarding laying of railway line at Dahod, Jhabua, Dhar and Sardarpur-Indore sections of Maxi Godhara railway line has not even started. It shows negligence towards the adivasi areas. The Central Government is not determined for the development of adivasi areas and that's why these are being deprived of railway facilities.

Meghnagar railway station of my Parliamentary constituency Jhabua-Ratlam is situated at the centre of Mumbai-Delhi railway line. There remains a heavy rush of passengers as people from Jhabua, Bansvara, Panchmahal and various other districts of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat come here to board trains to proceed to their destinations. Meghnagar is the only major railway station in adivasi dominated district of Jhabua. However, passenger facilities are inadequate at this railway station. Due to the small length of overhead shed, people face a lot of problem in winter, rain and summer seasons. As a result of inadequate arrangements for water, people face acute problem of drinking water in summer. It is essential to extend the over head shed at Meghnagar railway station and the serious problem of drinking water also cannot be ignored. Therefore, adequate arrangements should be made in this regard at this railway station.

Sabarmati Express running between Faizabad and Ahmedabad should be provided halt at Thandala Road railway station as large number of commuters use this station.

MEMU train running between Baroda and Dahod should be extended up to Ratlam to facilitate the passengers. Another MEMU train runs from Dahod to Ujjain. People of my Parliamentary Constituency would be greatly benefited if this train is extended up to Bhopal.

Gorakhpur-Bandra Avadh Express should be provided halt at Bamnia Road to benefit the people. Sufficient number of commuters are available there. A Vantika super fast train running between Indore and Bandra should also be provided a stoppage at Thandala railway station as large number of passengers are available there to take this train for Bandra.

There is no other train except Rajkot Express from Ratlam to Bhopal. Earlier, train no. 111 and 112 used to run from Ratlam to Bhopal at night. But due to some reasons, these trains have been discontinued. Therefore, new trains should be introduced on this track. Or the Dahod-Uttain MEMU train which remains standing for 8-9 hours at Ujjain should be converted into 9 superfast train and extended upto to Bhopal.

Ratlam-Mathura passenger train should be extended up to Dahod. Kota-Agra train number 281-282 which remain standing Kota for 13-14 hours should be extended up to Ratlam.

Seat reservation facility should be made available for the passengers travelling up to 100-120 km in sleeper class coaches of express/mail trains during day time.

Platforms are in dilapidated condition at small stations like Ravati and Bamnia. Adequate arrangements for light and drinking water should also be made there.

The facility of 'Sulabh Toilets' is not available at platform No. 1,2,5, and 6 at Ratlam station. It creates problems for the women. Therefore, adequate arrangements for 'sulabh toilets' should be made there immediately.

The new godown constructed with lakhs of rupees at Ratlam should be put into use immediately. A new platform should be built at Ratlam station towards the Railway colony side to facilitate the operation of trains.

The work on Neemuch-Indore broad gauge line should be completed at the earliest. A reservation centre should be opened in Jhabua city.

Indore is a major industrial centre of Madhya Pradesh and population wise this is a number 1 in Madhya Pradesh. At present a superfast train called Avantika is available from Indore to Bandra. As large number of people travel on this route and sufficient number of sleeper coaches have not been added in this train, passengers face a lot of difficulties. Moreover, this is the only train which is available up to Bandra at present. In view of the number of passengers in the waiting list, it

[Shri Kantilal Bhuria]

is totally insufficient. Therefore, one more train should be introduced on this route for facilitating the passengers. If a new Express train is introduced on this route, it would not only benefit the people but also generate additional revenue for the Railway Ministry.

Amritsar-Mumbai Frontier Mail and the superfast train from Jammu-Tavi to Mumbai should be given a halt at Meghnagar railway station as sufficient number of passengers are available at this station.

Train number 2431-2432 express from Hajrat Nizamuddin to Trivendrum should be given as halt at Ratlam station as this is an important station between Delhi and Mumbai railway route.

[English]

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA (Contai): Thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me this opportunity. Let me first of all express the deep sense of disappointment of the people of Contai and Egra whom I have the honour to represent in this House. For years, they were looking forward to completion to Tamruk-Digha project. In this Budget, what happened was contrary to the promise made by the Railway Minister himself that trains will ply up to Contai by March this year and up to Digha by March next year, that is, 2004. The first date has been postponed by another three months and it is not known as to when this will be completed. There are a lot of contractual problems. Sir, this is a problem essentially for the Railways to solve. But there is no reference to Digha at all. One wishes that the hon. Minister should have indicated in the Budget as to when the long delayed project is expected to be completed. Otherwise, I will not be doing justice to the people whom I have the honour to represent. In fact, they have a deep sense of betrayal.

There has been a lot of talk of safety and security. But to my mind, the hon. Minister has not given adequate attention to the question of safety and security. In fact, that has been derailed in the Budget. There are some references but the White Paper does not indicate where the funds have to come from.

There is a talk about the famous Rs. 13,000 crore. There is the question of cess. But for how long can cess be levied? Sir, the question of accident has practically become a folklore in the Indian Railways with the result that, today, we have come to a situation where sometimes people are afraid of boarding the trains. We have to get out of this situation. It is very difficult to create a good image but very easy to lose it. Bad image is something which you get very easily but is difficult to lose. Somehow

or the other the Railways, in the last several years, and specifically after the Rafiganj disaster, has acquired a kind of folklore of lack of safety and security and so on and so forth. It will take a long time before the Railways can recover from the shock and once again get back to the proper image which, as I said, is very difficult to get but easy to lose.

There are a lot of figures, which has been given. But I am afraid that many of them are make-believe figures which are without any reference to reality. According to the figures given, the passenger fare 2003-04 has been estimated at Rs. 13,620 crores as against Rs. 12,730 crore in the last Revised Estimates. Again, according to a statement made by the Chairman of the Railway Board, the Railways have lost about Rs. 720 crore in the passenger traffic last year because of the fares have been hiked too high. If that is possible, how is the Minister expecting, in the next year's Budget, the passenger earnings to go up substantially? To my mind, that is not going to happen.

Coming to freight, once again it is a fact that the Railways have lost goods traffic from roughly 80 per cent which they accounted for two to three decades ago to about 20 per cent today. It will be a long haul before they can recover that lost goods traffic. It will take a very long time. But there is no serious approach. There is no marketing approach in the entire approach of the Railways. It is not just enough to say that we will have so much of goods traffic. The Railway officials have to learn to go out of their offices to the market places to seek goods traffic which is not forthcoming. Unless they can assure of door-to-door delivery—it is not possible to do that—the Railways will continue to lose big chunk of traffic.

Now, the Minister's speech has a lot of references to the magic effect that will be there by the Golden Triangle. Sir, when the Golden Triangle of the Prime Minister's famous scheme really comes into effect, to my mind, it is going to take away a lot of traffic from the Railways. Railways are going to lose and a lot of strategic thinking is necessary to see how Railways can meet this competition.

A lot of passengers are taken away by air traffic now. It is happening with tremendous concessions which have been given by the airlines. Now, what is the long-term planning to take back the passenger traffic from the airlines to the Railways? All these things need to be given a lot of thought.

Now, the Lufthansa runs a railway between Bonn and Frankfurt because they are not just content with running the Airlines. I think the time has come when the Railways should also think of operating some coaches and buses to supplement the inadequacies which exist in the railway network system. There is no reason why they should not do that. They have to be flexible.

Shri Nitish Kumar, in his first incarnation, took very good step when he appointed the Rakesh Mohan Committee. It has been one of the real and solid attempts at infusing some modern management techniques into this antiquated railway network system. But unfortunately Rakesh Mohan Committee's one recommendation advising caution against further frittering away with the zonal system became a kind of an obsession. With the result that Shri Nitish Kumar, in his second incarnation, refused to touch all other alimnet recommendations of the Rakesh Mohan committee. A golden opportunity has been lost where group of real management experts—I am talking as a teacher of management myself—went into this antiquated railway system and made some very solid and scientific recommendations. But they were not touched at all just because of this confusion over the zonal re-arrangement system.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Railways have to learn a lot and do a lot. It is much too colonial and it is much too feudal. It started in the private sector in the colonial times. Many people do not remember that. It made a tremendous amount of contribution to India's economy. In the entire industrialisation process really Railways were the forerunners. At a time when people were much poorer, it fixed up a fare system and freight system, recovered the money and repaid the money to the shareholders. Afterwards, as a result of the expiry of the lease, the system came back to the Government.

Mr. Chairman, we talk about BOT, Build-Operate-Transfer, because the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank tell us. But in India, in a way, Indian Railways were the first example of BOT in history. We seem to forget sometimes our own tradition. The colonial Government treated railways as a colonial system, then it also acquired some feudal tradition. A lot of things need to be changed. It has to be modern.

One of the things I would strongly recommend to the Minister is that he should give a serious thought as to why the Railway Board should continue at all. To my mind, it has outlived its utility. It is just a fifth wheel which does not serve any purpose. It is time the Government overcome this dichotomy and convert the

Railway Ministry into a proper and full-fledged Ministry. In fact, I would say that there is no need for a separate Railway Budget. Easily, the Railways can be made independent corporate entities or companies, maybe with a sort of holding company under a kind of full-fledged Ministry. We would not then have to go into all these complaints about the railway system, how much general revenue should support the system, how much dividends etc. These are all impractical and these are all unrealistic. We have no time to waste time on this kind of inane debates and theoretical exercise. I think this point should be given utmost thought that the time has come when, like the Ministry of Defence or the Ministry of Steel, the Railways should also be converted into a regular Ministry with a Minister and a Principal Secretary and maybe a few other Secretaries. The other things should be corporatised.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member, please conclude.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA: I will conclude. These issues are not usually mentioned. These are all hard realities. Sometimes it is necessary to address ourselves to these realities. Mr. Chairman, my chain of thought has been disturbed. So, I thank you very much. I conclude.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Ramanand Singh will lay his speech on the Table of the House.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH: (Satna): Sir, I lay my speech on the Table of the House.

[English]

SHRI MADHAB RAJBANGSHI (Mangaldoi): Sir, I would also like to lay my speech on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is good if this trend of laying speeches continues 90 more members are in the list to speak. Please do not take more than 5 minutes to put forth your views. Even with this time limit, debate would not be finished before 11 O'clock. Therefore, I want that hon. Members should take least time in expressing their views. Time would be saved if more and more hon. Members lay their speeches.

I request the hon. Members who want to do so, may lay their speeches on the Table of the House.

SHRI ALI MOHD. NAIK (Anantnag): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Members of small parties should also be given opportunity to speak.

SHRI SAIDUZZAMA (Muzaffar Nagar): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I also want to put forth my views. I should also be given permission to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You will definitely get the chance to speak. Please sit down.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH (Satna): Sir, the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Minister of Railways has been prepared keeping in view the whole country. The hon. Minister has considered to provide railway facilities throughout the country from North-South and East-West. The entire House and Members of almost all the parties have welcomed this Budget. I also welcome it. Further, I would like to congratulate the hon. Prime Minister for providing funds generously for the development of railways especially in Jammu and Kashmir and to connect the quadrilateral national highways and ports with the railways.

Sir, I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for providing railway facilities to old people, disabled and journalists. Special attention should be given for the construction of new bridges in place of the old ones, to change the signal, gauge conversion and to repair and improve the railway bogies. Sufficient funds have not been provided in the Budget for this purpose.

I also congratulate the hon. Minister for introducing a new train from Rewa to New Delhi. He acceded to our demand and extended help to connect the Vindhya division directly with Delhi. Local people are waiting for the fulfillment of the assurance given by the hon. Railway Minister to run the Hajkot Express thrice a week. We are also waiting for the opening of booking office behind the Satna railway station towards Dhvari side. Decision is being taken regarding the third platform. In the public interest Kamayani Express and Mahakaushal Express should be given stoppages at Jaitvara and Unchanhara railway stations respectively.

Chaupan passenger train up to Katni remains standing for 10 hours there. It should be extended up to Stana. Adequate arrangements should be made for cleanliness and drinking water facility at Satna, Manner, Kutholi, Jaitvara and Chithara railway stations. Lalitpur, Singrauli railway line should be completed in 5 years so that Panna, Chhattarpur, Teekamgarh, Satna, Rewa and Sidhi district of Vindhya division could get the railway facility.

[English]

DR. MAHENDRA SINGH PAL (Nainital): Am I allowed to lay my speech on the Table of the House?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Dr. Mahendra Singh Pal, please lay your speech on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

*DR. MAHENDRA SINGH PAL: Sir, as per the Budget for 1996-97, a survey has been done for the laying of railway line from Ramnagar to Haridwar via Jaspur and Kalagarh and also to connect it from other side via Kitcha-Sitarganj and Nanakmatta. The construction of this railway line would connect all three areas of Uttaranchal viz. Kumau, Garhwal and Tarai. At present U.P. Roads are being used to go from Delhradun to National (A Metro rail like scheme can be implemented for the 10-12 km. area of Ramnagar Kalagarh which comes under Corbett Park). The State of Uttaranchal enjoys the status of special State. Therefore, construction of this railway line would be in the interest of the State. Nanakmatta is a Gurudwara of international fame. The 55 k.m. railway line from Lalkuna to Nanakmatta should be extended up to Tanakpur. A new train should be introduced from Jammu-Tawi to Kathgodam in which some coaches should be added from Kotdwar and Ramnagar. A direct train from Ramnagar to Delhi with all three categories of coaches should also be introduced. It would also facilitate the tourists coming to National Corbett Park and will also be in the interest of the new State. In view of the 'Mahakumbh' being organised at Haridwar, upgradation of stations like Haridwar, Rishikesh, Kathgodam and Ramnagar should be done and their condition improved to handle the crowd there. Computerised reservation facility should be made available at the major tourists spots and hilly district headquarters of Uttaranchal. I also request to provide better railway facilities at Tanakpur and Ramnagar and to open AC workshop at Ramnagar and to upgrade the station. "Mahakumbh" Mela of international fame is going to be organised in 2004 at Haridwar. However, no new scheme has been included in the Budget from this point of view. For this purpose the hon. Chief Minister of Uttaranchal himself met the hon. Railway Minister three months prior to the presentation of Budget. The hon. Minister of Railways had also given assurances in this regard.

The Lalkuan-Lucknow narrow gauge line should be converted into broad gauge without delay. Tanakpur rail

line in district Bageshwar, which was surveyed in British period should be surveyed again and provision of funds be made in the Budget in order to start work at the earliest. Survey work is essential to lay the rail line between Tanakpur and Jaulajeevi of district Pithoragarh. It should be done immediately.

For these schemes of Uttaranchal, Planning Commission should provide funds. I request the hon. Prime Minister to instruct Planning Commission for the same.

Delhi-Kathgodam Shatabdi Express should be run daily. The Northern Zone and Eastern Zone should be combined to form a zone for Uttaranchal and it should be named as Uttarakhand zone. Trains originating from Hardwar should be run from Luxur.

Sir, the Chief Minister of Uttaranchal Shri Narain Dutt Tiwari had drawn the attention of the former Railway Minister Mamataji by writing a letter towards the necessary work to be done in the field of railways in Uttaranchal.

[English]

The new State of Uttaranchal has come into existence on the map of India and Ministry of Railway will be examining the overall Railway allocation for this new State. I am sure you will be announcing your first package for this newly formed State. You may kindly recall that I had discussed with you on many occasions as well as my several correspondence for clearance of various proposals pending in the Ministry. As you know very well that the major landscape (about 70%) of Uttaranchal is hilly which includes very remote alpine and International border area where no Railway network is available as on today. Only in the plain/Tarai area of this new State has Railway lines viz. Hardwar, Rishikesh, Dehradun, Kotdwar, Ramnagar, Haldwani, Kathgodam, Tanakpur and Khatima and which are connected from the railway line of adjoining districts of U.P., i.e. Saharanpur, Mujaffamagar, Najibabad, Moradabad, Rampur and Pilibhit. The Ministry of Railways has already conducted survey as per announcement made in the 1996-97 Rail Budget for a new railway line between Ramnagar/Jaspur/Kalagarh-Kotdwar-Hardwar and connecting it with Tanakpur via Kichha, Sitarganj and Nankmatta. This line will not only integrate the whole of Uttaranchal but also reduce the distance between Kumaon and Garhwal/Hardwar/Tarai region. This will require early implementation. In addition to this the following proposals have also been announced in the annual Budget of the Railways and allocation of sufficient Budgetary provisions

for completion of these projects in the forthcoming financial year may kindly be made.

The Bareilly-Lalkuan meter gauge conversion into broad-gauge was announced in the year 1987-88 but this project is still pending due to insufficient budgetary provisions made in the annual Rail Budgets in the past and now it is held up due to the pending clearance of Planning Commission. I hope with your personal intervention, this long pending project will get place in the forthcoming Railway Budget. This line has to be extended up to Pilibhit-Tanakpur segment to facilitate the speedy construction of the Mega Indo-Nepal Project of Pancheshwar Puniagiri and Dhauliganga.

Proposal announced in Railway Budget 1998-99 regarding laying of new broad gauge between Kichha to Khatima via Sitarganj and Nanakmatta (Nanakmatta is a very renowned and historical holy place of Sikhs which is visited by millions of pilgrims from round the world) requires urgent implementation so as to connect this holy place with the rest of the country.

The other important proposals which are pending for action are:—

Running of a new train to link Dehradun to Kathgodam with coaches for Ramnagar and Tanakpur, Temporary Capital of Uttaranchal is located at Dehradun, and the new High Court at Nainital and therefore, these regions require constant Railway connectivity.

Computerisation of all major Stations in the Uttaranchal like Kotdwar, Haldwani, Kathgodam, Ramnagar, Kashipur, Rudrapur, Lalkuan, Khatima and Tanakpur Stations.

The AC 1st and 11nd tier coach in the Ranikhet Express Train in the Ranikhet Express train in the Ramnagar-Delhi sector is pending due to non-availability of workshop facilities for AC coaches at the Ramnagar Workshop, which requires urgent and speedy completion.

Proposals regarding introduction of a regular Shatabdi express instead of Summar Shatabdi presently running in the Kathgodam-New Delhi sector may be announced in the forthcoming Rail Budget.

Running of a new train from Ramnagar/Haldwani/Lalkuan to Delhi starting in the afternoon hours and starting in the morning from Delhi to these destination and the same facility for Kotdwar-Delhi-Kotdwar Sector. This will not only facilitate to the local passengers but also to the tourists and other business/farmer community as well. You will appreciate that the New Uttaranchal

[Dr. Mahendra Singh Pal]

State requires support from various quarters to become self sufficient and stand on its own in the near future. The major revenue resources in this State would be through the promotion of Tourism industry. For this, smooth and safe transportation facilities will be the basic need and the vital role to play in this regard is of the Railways. I hope you would kindly, keeping in view the various priorities of this newly born State, announce special package in your forthcoming Rail Budget speech and include the above mentioned projects.

Dear Sir, our C.M., Hon. N.D. Tiwari, is doing his best to give the good direction to the State of Uttaranchal. But without your help, Central Government as well as Railway Ministry the hopes of Uttaranchal people cannot be achieved. I hope so. Moreover, Uttaranchal should have new capital.

[Translation]

Sir, Uttaranchal is a new State. Sixty percent of its total area consists of forests, sanctuaries etc. If the Railway Ministry undertakes the above mentioned action, the tourism in Uttaranchal will get a boost which in turn will create job opportunities. It will lead to emergence of largest cultural tourist centre of the world and the forests, water, rivers, education and human resources will be utilised properly.

Sir, with a view to encourage tourism in Uttaranchal, the Government should lay the railway line as it had been laid in Himachal Pradesh.

[English]

SHRI HOLKHOMANG HAOKIP (Outer Manipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this chance.

At the outset, I would like to say that the Railway Budget is very nice. I like it very much but I cannot support it because Manipur is nowhere in the Railway Budget. I am from Manipur. It is nowhere in the Railway Budget.

I would like to draw your kind attention to certain things. I will be very short in making my speech. I would like to speak in the Manipuri language.

*Mr Chairman Sir, thank you very much for giving me this chance. Railway Budget is very nice and I like it very much. But I cannot support it because Manipur was nowhere. I am from Manipur Sir. Manipur was nowhere in the Railway Budget. To draw your kind

*Original in Manipur.

attention I will be very short Sir. And I will speak in Manipur language. Sir, in Manipur there is no railway. If there is no train at least you can bring a coach at Imphal city so that we can see it. Our children and people from rural areas never see a train, they saw it only in T.V. in fact there is no railway and no train in Manipur. So we feel very sorry and we are suffering too.

Already sanctioned line between Diphu and Karong was inaugurated by the Union Railway Minister. After the inauguration the survey and estimate work was also completed. Now they have left it completely. It is not there now. This railway line is no more. I would like to request you to do something for those people who have not seen train. They are suffering like anything due to lack of train services. Therefore a train connection should be given for them at the earliest.

Sir, first of all I would like to bring to the notice of this House that non-lapseable 10 percent of the budgetary allocation of this Ministry is not being earmarked for North East. All other Ministries and Departments are allocation 10 percent of their Budget to the North East. But the Railway Ministry is not doing so. It is the program of the NDA Government to provide 10 percent of the Budget to the North East. This is an aberration on the part of the Railway Ministry. I urge upon the Ministry to allocate 10 percent of its Budget to North East as early as possible.

Secondly Sir, railway line is extended up to Jiribam, that is the border of Manipur. But there is no platform. It is wonderful. No platform, but railway! Railway line has touched the corner-most part of Manipur.

Now I want to know whether the Diphu-Karong line has been cancelled or not. Is it still alive?

Sir this year's plan outlay of the Ministry is Rs. 12,918 crore. Whether 10 percent of it is actually earmarked for North East or not? Is it actually going to the non-lapseable fund of North East? We have serious doubts. If the Government is not following its own policy, what can we say.

There was a ticketing booth/counter at Imphal. It is no more now. It is completely defunct. Now we have to go to Guwahati to book the train ticket. We have to go from Imphal to Guwahati to get our ticket. That is why I would like to request the Railway Minister that ticket booking facility should be reopened at Imphal. Please revive it very soon. Then Sir, they are claiming that Manipur is in the railway map of India. It is not so. Indian Railways have completed 150 years. But we have not seen a single railway line in Manipur. We are not

touched by the national rail network. In fact we have no facilities.

Rail line is likely to reach Srinagar or Kashmir valley very shortly due to the initiative of the Government. Then what about State capitals of the North East like Aizwal, Kohima, Gangtok (Sikkim), Imphal, etc. They should also be provided a railway head and train services. This is our earnest request.

North East has become 'far east' ! In the absence of railways North East certainly becomes 'far east'. Therefore there is hardly any progress and substantial development in this region. The line between Lumding and Silcher is yet to be completed. It is a very very important railway line.

Lastly, what I want to say is that kindly remember, kindly see us, kindly remember and think about us, about North East where no railway line has gone. I will request the Railway Minister to reach at least as I said, one coach, one bogie of rail at Imphal so that we may see railways. That is why the North East still remains as a remote part in the absence of railways. We come to Guwahati by bus. It takes one night and one day completely to reach Guwahati. If railway line is there it would be a great relief. Sir, I do not know what is railway, and I must know it and we must know it. We must be provided the facility.

*SHRI MADHAB RAJBANGSHI (Mangaldoi): I would like to express my views on the Railway Budget placed by the Hon'ble Minister Shri Nitish Kumarji on 27th February, 2003.

Sir, I would like to thank the Hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumarji for declaring in the House, that Rangia Rail Division will start functioning from 1st April, 2003. It was a long pending demand of the people of Assam which has been fulfilled by Shri Nitish Kumarji.

Sir, I would like to raise my demand again that the Rangia Mokokseleng Gauge Conversion survey work has not yet been completed inspite of protracted demand. The Hon'ble Railway Minister has completely ignored the demand in the Railway Budget speech about the completion of the survey work and thereafter gauge conversion. I again demand, that the gauge conversion work should be undertaken without any further delay.

Sir, last year I propose for a new Railway line and for the survey of Baihata, Routa Via Kharupetia Line, but

the survey work has not yet started, I again demand for undertaking the survey work on this proposed line without and further delay.

Sir, The conditions of Railway Stations viz Nalbari, Rangia, Baihata, Charlai, Gureswar, Kharabari, Tangla, Harsingha, Udalguri, Mazbat, is in a very deplorable conditions, no provision of basic amenities for the passengers is existed, No light provision and other infrastructure, such as toilet, drinking water, waiting room for the facility of the passengers of all class.

Sir, since past it is seen, that the Ministry of Railways, as well as, the Railway Board has ignored or neglected the N.F. Railways in all respect, inspite of the protracted demands from various corners, not a single local youth has given employment whereas outsiders are given preference in appointments in N.F. Railways. This step motherly treatment with the local un-employed youth is a matter of great concern and time is not far, to start a massive agitation against the N.F. Railway Recruitment Board.

Sir, In the past, I have requested the Hon'ble Minister in person as well as in written to give proper attention in order to eliminate the poverty of this area, but all in vain. I again demand for giving special package to the candidates of North East Region and stop discrimination at all level.

Sir, Assam is a rich state with resources, but inhabited by poor people, as the Central Government miserably failed to install industries in this region, and ignored the interest of the North East Region, which resulted poverty. The Financial position of the State Government is worst. All the MP's from Assam have requested time and again for the instalation of a coach factory in all, at Rangia or Tinsukhia, so that skilled, and educated un-employed youth of this region could be adjusted, but the Hon'ble Railway Minister ignored the demand and not a single word is said in the budget speech. I again demand for the instalation of a coach factory in Assam without any further delay as the raw material required is available in abundance on cheaper rate including the labour.

Sir, I would like to invite the attention of the Hon'ble Railway Minister with regards to lack of basic amenities in the trains viz Brahmaputra Express, N.E. Express and Avadh Express are very deplorable even from their starting point Tinsukhia and Guwahati. I strongly demand to provide basic amenities for the benefit of the passengers.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

*SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY (Ranchi): Sir, after going through the railway budget presented by this Government it seem that people have got the first budget of its kind after independence. It is being appreciated not only in the country but in the whole world. For the first time, no freight has been increased, passenger fair has not gone up but rather come down. In spite of this, 50 new trains have been introduced, frequency of 13 popular train services has been increased and 24 trains have been extended. I ask the opposition whether they have ever presented such a budget? The opposition is spell-bound to see this budget. They were trying to criticise the budget as election budget on T.V. Even today, many trains run Jam-packed and the entire train is reserved fifteen days prior, in the country. People have to wait for months together to take their goods from one place to another.

The hon. Minister of Railways has prepared this budget after, feeling these problems which has been hailed by the people of all class as a benevolent budget. This budget will accelerate the pace of economy and new vistas for undertaking other reforms will be opened up. Without any hike in rail fare, the Government has made a comprehensive scheme for the development of railways and in order to encourage that, this House should pass this budget so that the Minister of Railways could be enthused and could make the next budget better than this one.

This Government has decided to observe the forthcoming year as Railway customer facility year in which steps will be taken to make journey more comfortable. The passengers have to undergo a lot of pains in getting tickets cancelled from railway reservation. This Government has kept these problems in mind and has announced refund facility etc. I firmly believe that the Indian Railways will deal with every problem faced by the customers at its own level so that railway customers may not have any problem and inconvenience.

Railways play an important role in the development of a country. The railways can better deal with the transportation problem that comes in the way of development works. The railways should work in those areas which are backward in industrial development. We can offer dependable assistance through railway, service in developing backward areas. Railway service should be extended to those areas where it does not exists. By doing this, we can earn additional revenue for the railways and can undertake development work also.

In the budget of 2003-2004 rupees 10607 crore will be spent on plan and rupees 2311 crore on railway security. Which come to the total of Rs. 12918. Railway has estimated the gross income of rupees 43445 crores in 2002-2004 and has expressed hope. That this budget will give the profit of rupees 3533 crore i.e. the budget of deficit has been presented always before. This time the budget of profit has been presented. In last two years rail accidents have occurred causing heavy damage to railway and a large part of revenue has been spent on this. For this, survey of dilapidated rail tracks and bridges should be done and their repairing is most essential.

In this budget attention has been paid to many facilities. The age of senior citizens has been reduced to 60 from 65 and the people suffering from cancer, thalissimia and heart-problems have been provided 75 percent, 50 percent and 30 percent concession in sleeper class, 1st & 2nd class A.C. and Rajdhani Express respectively which is genuine on humanitarian ground. At the same time, arrangements should be made to provide reservation to such ill persons on priority basis.

This budget has left the commort man unburdened hence the criticism of the opposition. In earlier budgets, there used to be some hike in fare of freight but this time there is no hike; therefore the opposition is startled.

There is three percent decline in railway passengers. For this, the railway should make efforts to increase the number of passengers. For this, the facility and problems of the passengers need to be taken care of. The Government has made provisions for this in this budget and it is my firm belief that the Government will succeed in its endeavour. For this, we need to pay attention to safety because the passenger is more concerned to his life than to facility. For this, the Government should identify such officers who are not concerned about the problems of the passengers. The Government also need to contemplate that the officials should properly behave with the customers.

There is corruption in railway also due to which railway is not taking full benefit of its assets, and the revenue it should get, it is not getting. Rail projects are affected due to lack of funds and many projects are going on for a long time and their cost too, is escalating. Stern action should be taken against corrupt officers and employees.

Previous Governments of the country have started such rail services and many such projects are not giving profits to railway. For this, the Government need to think afresh. It is true that social welfare is the duty of railway

*Speech was laid on the Table.

but these services should earn some profit also. In some Janashatabdi rail services there are only six passengers. Railway would have to pay attention towards this also so that social welfare as well as profit earning may go simultaneously. It has been observed that survey is not done and even if it is done, not properly before starting new trains due to which railways are incurring loss.

Some people view that due to the running of new trains, increase in frequency and extension of their destination will burden the tracks and the problem of their maintenance will aggravate. But this Government has taken steps for optimum use of these rail tracks. It will generate extra income for railways. The Government has assured of three percent hike in passenger traffic. It will generate rupees 890 crore as extra revenue. This railway budget indicates full utilization of railway assets. In order to realise this assurance in full, the Government would have to take steps sternly otherwise the dereliction of employees and their corrupt conduct may come in the way.

Last year, the railway budget was not even passed and Godhra incidence took place in Gujarat which caused heavy damage to railways. For two months, Western Railways and Central Western Railways had to spend huge amount on repair and rehabilitation work. Had there been no Godhara incidence, the budget, today, would have been much better.

Many people fail to get reservations in summer. For this, the Government has arranged for many additional summer trains. It has been observed that these trains do not reach their destinations in time. The Government would have to take such steps so that these additional trains might reach their destinations in time.

Railway earns its 63 percent revenue from freight. Modern technology and computer etc. should be used in freight related work so that the businessmen may receive their goods in time. Freight related work should be modernised to make it facility friendly. 29 percent railway revenue is earned from passengers. It can be increased by reducing fare and adding facilities. Hon. Minister of Railways has done both these works brilliantly and he deserves thanks. The Government has to take care of its land, lying unused, to make its commercial use which could earn additional income for it. In addition to this, revenue can be increased by constructing shops also on the platforms.

Railways spends 33 percent of its expenditure on the wages of its employees. Employees and officers should be utilized in a better way. For the security of the

country 3500 constables will be employed and 2000 people will be provided employment. Experiences tell that human resources are not utilized properly by the high officials which is necessary to be controlled. This year Rs. Three thousand crores has increased in railways operations. Such increase should be controlled. Otherwise there will be dearth of resources for railway investment.

For proper operation of trains. Fortified tracks and bridges are most essential; otherwise accidents will increase or trains will run at slow speed. For accelerating the speed of train's renovation, doubling of rail tracks and electrification have to be done afresh. There is a proposal of laying 225 km rail tracks which is not enough. It should be increased further and tracks should be laid in those places where they do not exist. In addition to this, for long distance trains, short routes should be taken so as to lessen the Journey times and fare. At the same time, there is a proposal for the electrification of 375 km in this budget. 5400 lines will be changed and 745 dilapidated bridges of the country will be renovated, which is the need of the hour.

There is a proposal to issue white paper on rail accidents. It has many advantages. On one hand, it will reveal the reality of bureaucrats and people will come to learn about accidents in the better way, which will generate awareness among people to stop these accidents and will participate in changing it. It will facilitate their assistance also.

The internal construction of trains also needs to be changed so as to minimise the number of injured and dead. In addition to this, the incidents of thefts and dacoity could also be reduced.

This Government has tried to rationalise the freight structure of cooking gas, petrol and cement so as to minimise their transportation cost on their carriage for lowering their prices. In this general budget their prices alone have gone up. Railway Budget is compensation for it.

This budget is replete with concessions. There is concession for senior citizens and ill persons, 10 percent concession in off peak hour period from 15 July to 15 September, 29 percent concession in Shatabdi Express, 22 percent concession in Rajdhani Express and 9 percent concession on 4 to 5 points in freight. The sale is on in railways. Due to these reductions there will be 5 percent hike in freight which will cause 4.3 percent increase. Due to this the profit of Rs. 235 crores has been estimated. Due to concessions in high class fares, there will be 16 percent increase in passenger traffic. The benefit of all

[Shri Ham Tahal Chaudhary]

this will increase job opportunities in railways. It will increase the revenue of railways also. This way, this budget is meant for public service. The journalists providing information to the people of the country have also benefited from this budget. Now they will get 50 percent concession on 30 thousand km. Cut in parcel rates is also the feature of this budget. Besides, the number of parcel train has been doubled i.e. from 5 to 11. In these trains ten boggies have also been attached of that type which will be like cold storage. This will save fruits and vegetables from damage.

At present, there are many non-profit making rail tracks numbering 115 which are running in heavy loss in the country. They are incurring the loss of Rs. 434 crore. Many people have advocated for the closure of these non-profit making rail services. We should not forget that railway is a public utility service where profit is not being earned. Efforts should be made to make it profit making.

For the first time, this Government has made local language the medium in written examination held for grade-IV employees. It will encourage local people. This should also be the suggestion of the House that local language should be made the medium of examination for high officials.

For checking rail accidents collision prone will be used on 1750 km. Hope we shall succeed in checking accidents.

In this budget many schemes carry great importance like the work of connecting rail lines with ports. It will save time in transportation and carriage of goods and reduce cost. This budget has started unreserved railway system.

When the opposition made dramatic remarks over the budget like it was an election budget, inexperienced etc. people were laughing at their remarks. Hon. Minister of Railways read 28 pages budget without stumbling and hope the development of railway will be likewise.

It has been observed that there is huge dirt on railway platforms and rail line which causes problem to the passengers. The Government will have to pay attention towards this end. Cleanliness plays a role in development. This House appreciates Operation cleanliness launched by this Government.

At end, I thank the hon. Minister of Railways for the fact that he has provided railway facility in Jharkhand also keeping in view the demand of the public. You have fulfilled your commitments. I congratulate you for this on

behalf of the people of Jharkhand. You have provided many facilities like Ranchi to Delhi Rajdhani Express twice a week, Ranchi to Mumbai Express via Rourkela, Ranchi to Bangalore and D.R.M. office in Ranchi etc. I congratulate you for this. I demand for running Ranchi-Delhi Rajdhani Express on Sunday from Ranchi and on Friday from Delhi. At the same time, I request to start it soon on priority basis. The work of laying double track on Ranchi-Lohardaga and its extension upto Cheri is going on slow pace, I demand for its speedier completion. Besides, I demand for speedier completion of Ranchi-Kodarma via Hazaribagh railway work. I request for quick start of rail facilities given to Ranchi by you.

Sir, I congratulate for this budget which has been brought by the hon. Minister of Railways in the interest of nation and public. At the same time, I congratulate the hon. Prime Minister whose inspiration has led to this kind of budget.

[English]

*SHRI DIP GOGOI (Kaliabor): Sir, at the very outset I would like to extend my hearty thanks to Shri Nitish Kumarji, the honourable Railway Minister for the inclusion of Bogibeel bridge over the Brahmaputra in the current budget; and also inclusion of regional language in the written examination of Railway Recruiting Board for the selection of candidates to 'D' category of staff to be employed in the railways. This will definitely help the unemployed youths seeking jobs in the railway.

Sir, the services of railway was introduced in Assam more than 100 years back by the British basically to carry Tea, Oil and Coal from Upper Assam. The service was extended to Tinsukhia, Digboi, Margerita and Lido. Assam was very much involved in the second world war. The railway played a great role to carry soldiers, ammunitions, labourers and other essential commodities. The Stelwell Road from Ledo to Wanting in the province of Yunan of China, a distance of more than 900 miles was built during the second world war. There is an Air Base in Dinjan near Digboi, from where thousands of air sorties were made during the war of Kunming of China to carry ammunitions and oil over the great Himalayas in a perilous condition.

Sir, now through your goodself, I wish to draw the attention of the Honourable Railway Minister for the following subjects. I am sorry to say that the assurance given by the Railway Minister in black & white for the reintroduction of Rail Bus from Haiborgaon to Moirabari and between Senchoa to Silghat is yet to commence. Here it may be mentioned that Railway Minister has given

*Speech was laid on the Table.

an assurance to introduce above Rail Bus service vide letter No. 96/Chg. II/16/NF/19 dt. 25.9.98. Subsequently the Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumar informed Shri Tarun Gogoi, the then Member of Parliament on 25.9.98 that Indian Railways had placed order for the manufacture of two 4 wheeler Rail Buses.

Sir, As you know that Assam is a backward state and communication facilities like road and railways are in bad shape. Instead of extending more railway facilities, the decision of withdrawal of existing facilities for last 100 years has been resented very much by the people of Assam.

Sir, I therefore request you kindly to take sympathetic view and issue necessary instructions to implement the assurance given by the Railway Ministry by introducing Rail Bus services from Haiborgaon to Moirabari and between Senchoa to Sighat at an early date, please.

Sir, the railway service presently in existence between Guwahati and Dimapur can be extended to Mariani, whereby both the districts of Golaghat and Jorhat will be covered.

[Translation]

SHRI SAIDUZZAMA (Muzaffarnagar): Sir, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards the problems of the people of Muzaffarnagar district in Uttar Pradesh regarding Railways. I hope that the Railway department will take appropriate action.

Sir, it was requested that the work of doubling of rail-line from Meerut Cant. to Muzaffarnagar Tapri should be taken up as soon as possible. Again through you, sir I reiterate the people's demand that the doubling of railway line should be started soon.

There is heavy movement of vehicular traffic on Railway gate No. 53 B. Nai Mandi and at times accidents too take place. The closure of the gates at this crossing wastes a great deal of time. So, it is necessary to build an over-bridge across this railway line for smooth movement of road traffic.

The present ticket agency is not much beneficial for the public because it is near the railway station. The ticket agency should be located near Shiv Chowk or Bari Dakkana or Jhansi Rani.

There is not adequate reservation facility for the people as the second counter closes at 2 P.M. So, both the reservation counters should be functional from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

There is an urgent need to improve the catering facility at the railway station. A new train should be run from Muzaffarnagar to Delhi. There should be a stoppage of Jan Shatabdi Express at Muzaffarnagar because it is the biggest trading centre of Jaggery in Asia.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI (Sitamarhi): Sir, I welcome the Railway Budget for the year 2003-2004. It was universally welcomed as there is no increase affected in passenger fare. The fare of Rajadhani, Shatabdi and other Express trains which connect the Metropolitan cities has been rationalised and those fares have been reduced keeping in mind the air fare for the same destinations. The prices of petroleum products have been increasing all over the world because of various reasons. These prices have been increased many times in our country and it caused a lot of din and bustle. The Minister of Railways has taken a vital decision of providing relief to crores of consumers by making 7½ to 10½ percent decrease in the freight charges of petroleum products. Moreover, in an era of disinvestments and retrenchment, it has been decided to recruit 3500 constables for safety and security purposes and 20,000 Group 'D' employees. It is a welcome step from the point of view of providing employment. Many facilities have been provided to the journalists and the facilities already existing for senior citizens and the patients have been increased. So, it can be termed as an excellent budget. It has received widespread acclaim and the critics could at the most call it as an election budget. So, I welcome this budget on behalf of myself as well as my party which has been presented by the hon. Nitish Kumarji under the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister.

At this juncture, I would like to say that the Minister of Railways, while delivering his budget speech, has admitted that there was a three per cent decrease in the number of railway passengers. Many steps have been taken to improve the situation. I welcome the proposal to introduce 50 pairs of new trains.

The fare of Rajdhani, Shatabdi superfast and other trains linking the metros have been reduced to make them competitive with the air fare. I welcome that step. It will check the decrease in the number of train users. But, I would like to suggest to the hon. Minister, through the chair, that steps should be taken to make the fare of those express and passengers trains rational which connect the places other than the Metropolitan cities. I suggest that those fares should be rationalised keeping in mind the competitive fare of the roadways buses.

In the beginning of my speech, I welcomed the reduction in the freight charges of petroleum products

[Shri Nawal Kishore Rai]

and will continue to do so because it will be beneficial for crores of consumers. In the same vein there is the proposal for very good supervision, survey, imparting training and the increase in the number of training institutions in the this budget for safety and security purposes. It is also a welcome step. It has been announced in the budget speech that Rs. 17,000 crore will be spent during the Five-Year Plan period on security, Rs. 12,000 crore will be provided as budgetary support and the rest will be collected from freight charges and passenger fare. It is an important decision. He has also mentioned about new recruitment of 20,000 Group 'D' staff for training, survey and supervision and also about new recruitment of more than 35,000 R.P.F. constables even when the manpower of R.P.F. is more than 70,000. It has been said in the budget speech that more power will be given to R.P.F. by introducing a new Bill.

But according to a survey published about security, a fact has come to light that 1578 accidents took place between January 1999 and November, 2002. Among those incidents, 85 per cent accidents were caused by human error, 6 per cent were caused by equipment failure, 4 per cent due to sabotage and 5 per cent due to other reasons. So, I want to give some suggestions. The hon. Minister of Railways is not present, but the other Minister is present. I hold the view that unless action is taken to correct human error and to make the staff and officers accountable, we can not ensure fool-proof safety only by spending Rs. 17,000 crore or by strengthening the tracks. Only five per cent accidents have taken place due to the failure of tracks and railway bridges and other equipment failures, but 85 per cent accidents were caused by human error. So, it is necessary that we should take extensive action to avoid the 'human error' which causes 85 per cent accidents.

16.00 hrs.

In addition to it, I want to say that this budget is praiseworthy and it has got widespread acclaim. In the budget speech presented in the House by the Hon. Minister, information has been given about some railway lines in item No. 47, 48, 49 and 50. The first information is about the new railway lines. The second information is about the completion of gauge conversion work which is going to be completed in the financial year 2003-2004.

I have been elected from Bihar. I welcome the declaration that Arrah-Sahasaram-Naukha section will be completed this year. I would like to say that the Parliamentary Constituency represented by the hon. Chairman, i.e. Jhanjharpur Parliamentary Constituency, Darbhanga Parliamentary Constituency, Madhubani

Parliamentary Constituency, Sitamarhi Parliamentary Constituency, Motihari Parliamentary Constituency, Shivhar Parliamentary Constituency and Betiah Parliamentary Constituency are the seven Parliamentary Constituencies which divide Delhi, the capital of the country into seven regions. The gauge conversion work on Jainagar-Darbhanga-Narkatiaganj-Sitamarhi railway line, which connects those seven Parliamentary Constituencies on Indo-Nepal border in the Northern part of Bihar, has remained neglected. The gauge conversion work from Samastipur Bihar, has remained neglected. The gauge conversion work from Samastipur to Darbhanga has been completed. In the same way, the gauge conversion work has been completed from Narkatiaganj to Raxaul. The border region of Seemanchal has been neglected as a colonial region. The foundation stone thereof was laid after getting the clearance in the Railway Budget of 1996-97 and the work was also started at that place but the situation has remained static. Rs. 18 crore have been sanctioned for it in the present budget but it will need a lot more money.

The hon. Minister had gone to inaugurate Sitamarhi Sita halt and the modernisation work and reservation counter at Janakpur Railway station one and half years ago. Thousands of people were present on that occasion and they had presented their demands. The hon. Minister announced in some of his meetings that the gauge conversion work from Jainagar to Sitamarhi will be completed by the end of the financial year 2003-2004 and it will be completed in two years. This was published in the newspapers also. Through the Chair, I want to say that the present Minister of Railways is known as a Minister who implements the announcements made by him. There are many Ministers who are known as Announcement Ministers but the present Minister of Railways believes in doing work. I am of this view and I have given an example through the Chair.

The Minister is not present in the House at this time. The announcements made by him were reported by the newspapers. The direction was also given to the concerned officials. But, there is no mention about it in this budget speech. I request the Chair to talk to the hon. Minister about this matter. The budget speech mentions those topics which were not announced earlier. I appreciate it. But, there is no mention about that public declaration which was made one and a half years ago. Regarding Sitamarhi in Bihar, I ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister in charge is noting down the points made by you. The Minister will answer that. Please conclude now.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will take just two minutes' time. Sitamarhi is the birth place of Jagat Janani Maata Janki and it is also a tourist place. At many times, discussion has taken place about Tourism Circuit or Sita Circuit in this House. We held talks with the hon. Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar about a package for Bihar. He has been the convenor of that core-committee. In that committee also, demands were raised about gauge conversion and a new railway line from Sitamarhi to Muzaffarpur. The matter was discussed publicly and it was decided that March, 2004 would be fixed as its target. But, there is no mention about it in the present budget. Through the Chair, I want the hon. Minister to include his commitment towards these two issues during his reply to the discussion and decided whether he is an 'Implementation Minister' or a 'Declaration Minister'.

The frequency of Swantrata Senani Express has been extended upto Darbhanga on a daily basis. I welcome that decision. In the same way, I welcome the introduction of Sapta Kranti Express which goes upto Muzaffarpur via Narkatiaganj but I want to say that initially it was introduced as a superfast express but unlike Vaishali Express that train does not travel as a superfast train after Gorakhpur. The hon. Minister should pay attention to it. In the same way, the Marudhar Express which originates from Varanasi and goes upto Agra, should originate from Muzaffarpur and should go upto Mathura to fulfill a long pending demand of the people of North Bihar. In addition to it, a new train should be introduced from Muzaffarpur to Surat. N.H.-77 crosses eastern gumti of Sitamarhi railway station and it passes through three to four districts. There is a long pending demand to construct an over-bridge there to facilitate smooth traffic movement. The National Highway and the Railway Ministry are both under the jurisdiction of the Central Government. That demands need serious attention and that commitment has not been included in this budget. I demand that an announcement about Jainagar-Darbhanga-Sitamarhi-Narkatiaganj-Sitamarhi-Muzaffarpur route should be made during his reply and moreover I demand through the Chair that the new railway route should pass through Muzaffarpur-Narayanpur gumti to Jainagar via Aurai-Pupri-Madhubani-Sitamarhi. The long standing demand for a new railway line from Sitamarhi to Jainagar should be included in the material modification of Madhubani-Sitamarhi-Muzaffarpur railway line because its survey was conducted during the tenure of Shri Ram Vilas Paswan ji. I support the budget and conclude with the demand that new rail lines should be constructed in North Bihar.

SHRI NANDKUMAR SINGH CHAUHAN (Khandwa): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I lay my speech on the Table of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right. The Members who want to lay their speeches on the Table of the House, they may do so.

*SHRI NANDKUMAR SINGH CHAUHAN: Sir, I, through you, would like to thank the hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumarji for presenting a glorious, lively and people oriented budget and strongly demand that the following trains may be provided stoppages at the following railway stations in my Parliamentary Constituency, Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh. Gondwana Express should be run up to Nagpur via Khandwa-Bhusawal.

Goa Express and Hawiganj-Mumbai Express should be given a halt at Burhanpur Station, Amritsar Dadar Express be given a halt at Dongargaon station, Kamayani Express at Beed Station and Nepa Nagar station and Punjab Mail be given a halt at Harsud station.

Provision of a stoppage to the train at the above mentioned stations will be very much beneficial in the public interest and also for the business of Railways.

[English]

SHRI PRAVIN RASHTRAPAL (Patan): Sir, I thank for allowing me to lay my speech on Railway Budget.

*Sir. This Budget is prepared with political consideration of elections in various States in the coming days. The Hon. Minister had decided not to make any cross-the-board increase in freight rates. However, he has not applied his mind for getting more work from the customers to increase freight—income to Railways. It is known to one and all that the major freight income is from oil, coal and other items which are transported by public sector undertakings. What about transport and that too factories to home or business place transport of goods, which is by Road transporters? How to divert this work to Railways? How to remove the Mafia and monopoly of few from the Railway Yards in certain States?

The Hon. Railway Minister in his speech had mentioned "Passenger Amenities Year" and "Customer Satisfaction Year". Is he aware that there are two major categories of passengers? (1) with Tickets, and (2) without tickets? All amenities will be provided to both types of

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Pravin Rashtrapal]

passengers. He should come out with a plan and project, how ticket less passengers are fined or punished. As far as customers (with tickets) satisfaction is concerned, the Minister should take maximum care of IInd Class and poor passengers travelling by passenger trains or mail *gadi*. Clean drinking water, clean compartment, clean toilets, clean platforms, clean surroundings are the few areas which require urgent attention.

Interaction in between Railway authorities and MP is minimum. The Zonal G.M. should meet MP of his zone at least once in three months.

There is no regional balance or justice in the following subject:

1. Gauge conversion;
2. New trains;
3. Frequency of trains and extension of services.

Highest route KM of gauge conversion work is in arrears in the State of Gujarat. The Hon. Minister had visited my constituency during 1997-98 in presence of other five Ministers and assured gauge conversion of Patan-Mehsana Railway lines which is only 49 KM. This was a public assurance but not carried out till date. Is he waiting for the next Lok Sabha election? According to the information given to me, Railway bridges and culverts on this route are constructed to suit broad gauge. Only tracks are to be laid. I request the Hon. Minister to fulfil his assurance, as Patan is the only district/HQ in Gujarat not connected by broad gauge. I also request him to approve "Computerised Reservation Centre" for Patan Station. Again, this is the only district in Gujarat which is not provided this facility. I am prepared to give Rs. 10 lakh from the MPLAD Fund. I also take this opportunity to know from the Railway Minister about Viramgam-Bhildi Railway line. It is true that the work of gauge conversion in between Viramgem-Mehsana is in progress but the same is at very slow speed. Let it be at the speed of 'express train'. Sir, I want Hon. Railway Minister to consider following Demands of passengers from North Gujarat:

1. New train from Palampur to Mumbai;
2. Extension of one train from Ahmedabad to Palanpur which is daily in between Ahmedabad-Mumbai.

3. Adequate stoppages to Siddhapur and Unja Railway Stations in trains running in between Delhi-Ahmedabad and Mumbai-Jaipur.
4. Stoppage of Rajdhani Train at Siddhapur. This train in-between Ahmedabad-Delhi has no stoppage in Gujarat. It has three stoppages in Rajasthan.
5. Revival of Mehsana-Taranga Railway lines.
6. Rail-Road overbridges at Siddhapur and Unjha.
7. Upgradation of Patna Railway Station.

The announcement of two new trains: (1) Bhavnagar-Ahmedabad and (2) Bhavnagar-Mumbai is a joke. Because it is conditional. The Railway Minister should inform the people of Gujarat when the work of gauge conversion will be completed.

Gujarat is the State, which gives maximum revenue to the Railway Department whether it is petroleum, oil, timber and salt, maximum freight income is from Gujarat. In return, we are not getting adequate works from Railways. We welcome the announcement that Ahmedabad Division will start functioning w.e.f. 1.4.2003 but let us know the place and venue where the Divisional office of Ahmedabad will be situated.

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Sivaganga): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will confine my presentation to certain points relating to my constituency and Tamil Nadu related issues.

The entire Budget concentrates upon various aspects. Without any funds, it is made as a Budget for the poor. But, at the same time, I had mentioned last year that the fund, which was allotted to a particular project, had always been diverted. In the Performance Budget, it had been clearly mentioned at page C-25 that Tiruchi-Manamadurai project, for which Rs. 10 crore were allotted last year, had been diverted at the planning stage. In the same manner, for the line, Madurai-Rameshwaram-162 kilometres, Rs. 10 crore, which was granted last year, had been diverted for minor variation. The same thing had happened last year also. For the past three years, out of this project, totally about Rs. 50 crore had been diverted. This is a very important project.

Chennai-Talaimannar line, that is for Sri Lanka, was the first one made by the Britishers. This was one of the projects which was made during the British period. It was the oldest one. According to the earlier study, the cost return ratio was 12.22 per cent. That is why, Kumari

Mamata Banerjee had accepted to include it in her Budget, and it was made in the Budget of 1999. Subsequently, the entire fund of Rs. 50 crore had been diverted to various other projects. This has been made without any progress at all. This is a total injustice to a backward area. Pudukottai, Sivaganga and Ramnad Districts are having rich heritage prosperity. Chettinad Heritage Home is there. About 1,600 temples are there. There is a very ancient Dutch Church, which was constructed in 1815. Many churches are there. Many mosques are there. It is a tourist spot. A bird sanctuary is there. A lot of income is being generated particularly in this area.

But it was totally neglected. I want to mention that even the President of India, Dr. Abdul Kalam, cannot ask for anything from our Budget, but at the same time, we should have the magnanimity to create this project from Trichirappalli-Manamadurai-Rameswaram, which is a viable project and which will give return immediately. This particular project should be included as one of the projects, at least, in the Diagonal through identified sub-projects.

The hon. Minister had mentioned in the Budget speech that this Diagonal through identified sub-projects will also be taken up in the Rail Vikas Nigam Limited project. Last time also, I had requested that Rameswaram Bond might be floated. It will not be just like the Konkan project; it will be a very successful project. Ramanathaswami of Rameswaram is worshipped throughout the world, especially in India. All the people are ready to purchase the bond which can be specifically marked for this particular project. It can be completed within two years. If you give back that Rs. 50 crore and if you float the Rameswaram Bond, along with the Diagonal if the identified sub-projects are also taken into consideration, the total project will be completed within two years.

In the same way, I would like to submit that you have announced a lot of concessions. The disabled persons have to be accompanied with one person. Then only they will be getting the concession. The disabled persons can go anywhere on their own, but they are not allowed to have the concession. They should have the same concession even if they go alone or if they are not escorted by any person.

I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that an over-bridge at Namanasamudram-Pudukottai junction, Karaikudi-Kottaiyur, Sivaganga-Thondi Road and also a new gate to Karaikudi-Periyakottai may be included.

Already three stations are closed, namely, Namanasamudram, Kottaiyur and Anaithidal. These should be re-opened. At least, the tickets should be made available so that the people can go. They are very important places.

In the same way, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to one thing. Shri Moorthy is now-a-days very famous in Tamil Nadu, but at the same time, he is handicapped for want of proper projects. The Southern Railway is allotted Rs. 365.10 crore. Compared to last year, this year the allotment is very less. This year, Rs. 46 crore is less for Tamil Nadu. Out of 59 MPs, including Rajya Sabha MPs from Tamil Nadu, 55 MPs are supporting this Government, but this Government is not giving sufficient attention to this area.

I also want to draw the attention to one thing which happened last year. I told that Lord Rama is so much appreciated throughout the world, especially by the BJP people. They are creating Ayodhya and other issues. But at the same time, Rameswaram is forgotten totally. At Rameswaram, Lord Rama had won the war. That should be appreciated. If they are really paying some attention to Lord Rama, they should give proper facility for Lord Rama also to be visited by both the national and the international tourists.

In the same way, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that during the course of the speech, he had mentioned that backward areas would be given more importance. This area is having textile mills. There are 30 textile mills in the Pudukottai, Sivaganga and Ramnad area. A lot of agricultural products are to be taken by train. But at the same time, this area is totally neglected. Both Sethu and Rameswaram Express trains are taking about 13 hours to travel about 420 kilometres. This is the longest time taken in any rail route. This should be immediately taken into consideration and proper appreciation should be given for this area.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRI VISHNUDEO SAI (Raigarh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I fully support the railway budget presented by the hon. Minister of Railways. I thank the hon. Minister for not imposing any additional burden on the rail passengers in the budget of this year. The budget presented by him had given relief to more than one crore passengers who travel in the trains daily. At the same time, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways towards certain problems pertaining to my constituency

[Shri Vishnudeo Sai]

Raigarh, Chhattisgarh and assurances given in this regard which have not been resolved or fulfilled in spite of various assurances given from time to time. These include opening of a railway reservation counter at Jaspur district headquarters, construction of Raigarh terminal and taking an initiative to grant sanction for the construction of Korba-Ranchi route.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Railway headquarter, Raigarh is situated at a distance of 212 km. from Raigarh, 190 km. from Jharsgura and 150 km. from Ranchi. A large number of passengers from Jaspur district run from pillar to post for the reservation and they have to take the help of the touts. This practice doubles the expense of the journey. Therefore, it is necessary to set up a reservation centre there. Similarly, the first district of Chhattisgarh State is Raigarh which is adjacent to Orissa. It is necessary to start some trains from there. The facility of terminal is not available for Mahanadi Express, Chhattisgarh Express and Bhopal Passenger. The foundation stone for the railway terminal has already been laid way back on 14th September, 1998 but the work has not been undertaken as yet. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I through you, would like to request the hon. Minister of Railways that the work should be started urgently.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the proposal for construction of Korba-Ranchi railway line has been pending for the last 20 years. A survey had been conducted for this purpose in the past but the construction work was left unattended after some time. This has lead to a feeling of great disappointment in the people of that area. All these three construction works are very important for my area. Therefore, hon. Minister is requested to undertake these three works without any further delay. While thanking the hon. Minister for presenting the Rail Budget in the public interest, I conclude my speech.

*SHRI TUFANI SAROJ (Saidpur): Sir, I, through you, would like to draw the attention of Minister of Railways and the House towards the negligence being given to eastern Uttar Pradesh particularly to Jaunpur and Ghazipur. I represent this area which is the most backward and poor area of Uttar Pradesh. There is neither any industry nor proper arrangement for transport. The Central Government had never taken the poverty and backwardness of this area seriously. The condition of roads is already worse and this area is the victim of the negligence of the Ministry of Railways.

Sir, the meter gauge lines from Varanasi to Gorakhpur via Audihar and from Varanasi to Ballia-Chhapra via

Audihar have been converted into broad-gauge lines. Some trains are also running on these railway lines for past few years. You would be surprised to know that the meter-gauge line of only about 60 km. between Audihar to Jaunparu has been left without any conversion. It has not only been left like that but not a single train runs on this railway line. Though the survey for gauge conversion has already been conducted on this line.

Sir, I had drawn the attention of hon. Minister of Railways towards this issue. I had also wrote a letter in this regard to the then Minister of Railways Ms. Mamata Banerjee on 8th December, 1999. I raised this matter during the Zero Hour on 15th December, 1999. I also draw the attention of the Government under Rule 377. But the Ministry of Railways had turned deaf ears to this issue. Ultimately I filed a petition before the Hon. Speaker, Lok Sabha on 3 May, 2000. Hon. Speaker, referred this petition to the Committee on Petition of the Parliament. The Committee on Petition after getting satisfied with the importance of this railway line called on the officers of Railway Board in its meeting and enquired about the facts of the matter. In its letter dated 16 May, 2000, the Ministry of Railways had intimated that the work related to survey for gauge conversion has been completed. It would involve an expenditure of Rs. 67 crores. Oral evidence of the representatives of the Railway Board was made before the Committee on Petition on 19th September, 2000. The Committee on Petition presented its 9th Report in Lok Sabha on 24 July, 2001. I again wrote a letter on 30th August, 2001. I appraised the Minister of Railways Shri Nitish Kumar of the factual position of the matter by writing a letter on 19th November, 2001. The Committee on Petition after taking my evidence as well as the evidence of the officers of the Railway Board directed the Ministry of Railways to undertake the gauge conversion of this line. On the direction of Committee on Petition, Lok Sabha Secretariat wrote a letter to Shri A.K. Das, Director (Planning), Railway Board on 5th February, 2002 and asked to furnish the action taken report in this regard. But the Ministry of Railways gave no importance to the directions of the Committee on Petition. Then, I again raised this issue in Lok Sabha on 20th December, 2002. The Ministry of Railways took no action in spite of repeated requests. The hon. Minister had made an announcement to run a DMO on the said railway line but it is still not known as to when that DMO will actually run on it.

Sir, I would like to highlight the importance of the above railway line. If the gauge conversion of this line would have been done, it would not only benefit the people of this area but a new railway route would have

been established for Lucknow via Chhapra, Ballia, Audihar, Jaunpur and Pratapgarh or for Lucknow and other places via Jaunpur-Faizabad. It would also relieve the pressure of traffic on the Mughalsarai and Varanasi route. Keeping in view the importance of this route, if the Government incurs some additional expenditure on the work of gauge conversion, it would not be considered as an excess expenditure.

Sir, the people of this area have been raising the demand of its gauge conversion for a long time. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to immediately take steps to convert the Audihar-Jaunpur meter gauge line into broad gauge line and some provision of funds, be it token, may be made for this purpose in this very budget.

[English]

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (Badagara): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Railway Budget for 2003-2004 presented by the hon. Minister of Railways Shri Nitish Kumar.

I wish I could thank the hon. Minister as many of colleagues on the Treasury Benches have thanked him. The Indian Railways is a symbol of national integration. This, I am emphasising, for reasons which I am going to state a little later.

We are very proud that India has the largest railway network under a single management in the world. The Indian Railways is one of the most important strategic instruments, enhancing the nation's defence preparedness also. In every respect, it has to have a significant place in the country's development but I must say that 85 per cent of the existing railway network has been contributed by the British and only the remaining portion has been contributed by us during the half a century after attaining Independence. The rate of increase in the railway network is very pathetic. I am not going into the whole detail for constraints of time. The capital input in coaches, wagons, route-kilometres and loco traction, etc. are not up to the expectation and not up to the requirement. It is not sufficient to meet the enormous demand in the number of passengers. The passenger amenities are also not up to the expectations as well as the demand coming from the people.

The hon. Minister has declared this year—150th year of the celebration of Railways—as the 'Passenger Amenities Year'. If we are to have ample provisions for passenger amenities, there should be enough resources

and there should be enough allocations also. But when one goes through the Budget, it is not found that it is going to satisfy the requirements to make it a real—'Passenger Amenities Year'.

I would like to mention one important point in this context that in the General Budget, Defence is getting a major chunk of our resources. Nobody will grudge that. Everybody is loyal that nation should be protected properly. So, the allocation in the Defence Budget will be going up according to the changing time and requirements. It is admitted also. But, at the same time, for Defence preparedness, one of the important tools is Railways and taking that factor into consideration, more budgetary provision should have come to the aid of the Railways, which is not forthcoming.

Another very important point is that the Railways own prime land all over the country. But wherever we go and wherever we travel, we find that it is not being looked after properly. A lot of encroachments are there and if that prime land is utilised by the Railway authorities, I am sure, that will contribute one of the major resources, with which the railways can do a lot of developmental work.

Another point regarding the resources is that if an intensive drive is undertaken to collect the arrears from the various departments allied with the railway activities, then crores of rupees could be collected and that also can be utilised for the developmental programmes, which I find is not done to the fullest extent.

Now, this year's Budget is termed to be a very popular and populist Budget. Even the Press and the electronic media have branded it as a popular Budget. But coming from the State of Kerala, I can never agree with this. I am not saying so because I am coming from the State of Kerala, which is a neglected State as far as this year's Railway Budget is concerned, but for another reason also I cannot support this view, though I wish I could do it. The public memory is very short-lived and when I say, public memory is very short-lived, I include both the Press and the electronic media in that because whatever hike the Railways or this Government wanted to do in the Railway Budget has been done, both in the case of freight charges and in the case of passenger fares. It has been done in a very substantial manner last year. If you just go through the last year's Budget, you will find that substantial amount of freight charges and passenger hike had been done. The burden is always there and the last year's burden is not taken away. So, it is termed as a populist and popular Budget, but the people forget that the burden, which was inflicted on the

[Prof. A.K. Premajam]

shoulders of the ordinary people, is being carried even now. I would like to remind that. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Prof. A.K. Premajam, please conclude.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Please give me a few more minutes. I am the second speaker from my party and there is no other speaker. ...*(Interruptions)* When this year the hike was done, it is claimed to be a rationalisation. Since I am not having the time to give details, I will not go into the details. But here the rationalisation is that in the case of passenger fares, the hon. Minister has said that appropriate tariff for each segment commensurate with level of service provided and the ability to pay for the same have to be evolved. That is a very good philosophy, if it is put into practice.

In the case of last year's Budget, the effects of which are carried along in this year's Budget, that philosophy has not been considered. The very ordinary class of passengers are having the heavy burden with the reductions made in the fares of Shatabdi and Rajdhani Expresses and also in higher classes and not in sleeper class or in the lower classes.

I have already mentioned that eight per cent hike has been done in freight charges. That is the case with the freight charges. Last year itself, a commodity like salt had been put to higher freight charge. I am not going to mention the other details like increase in coal, iron ore and raw material to steel plants, etc.

16.26 hrs.

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

There was an increase in this and that is not brought down. If at all a concession is given in the freight charge, as it is said that one had takes away what is given by the other hand, the hon. Minister of Railways has given certain concessions and those have been taken away two days later on the 28th February when the General Budget was introduced by the hon. Minister of Finance.

There is another aspect regarding patients getting concessions in the train journey. I would like to mention one thing here. It may appear to be out of place; but still that is correlated. These days, from the Prime Minister's Relief Fund, the grants are not coming. The very poor patients who were getting relief from the National Relief Fund, now-a-days are not getting it. So, this concession of the Railways will not actually have the effect; but it will actually be in a way, cancelling the effect.

Regarding the projects, the hon. Minister, last year, had made certain rationalisation and he had actually brought in a strategy and transparency. He said that just on the basis of area of State, population and throw-forward of projects in the State, it would be decided.

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Sir, for being progressive and cutting down on population, the people of Kerala are put to a disadvantage. Here, I would like to submit a suggestion that the rate of passengers travelling by train should also be taken into account and not merely the total population of a State. It does not mean that the entire population in travelling by train. The population does not give the correct standard or basis. It is my suggestion that along with population, the rate of travellers by train or the number of passengers should also be taken into account. The would actually give details of how much a State is contributing to the revenue of the Railways.

Now, there is a new programme of Rail Viaks Nigam Limited. I do not think that will ever come to work in our State, Kerala because no major project will come. Even this year, it is actually coming down.

Sir, I am coming to the conclusion of my speech. Regarding the safety measures also, I have one suggestion. I would like to state that a special safety fund of Rs. 17,000 crore has been constituted. Against this background, it is high time that we amend the rules and regulations regarding implementation of the safety measures. There are two categories—deposit work and non-deposit work. As far as safety works are concerned, those deposit works also should be enhanced by the contribution of fund from this safety fund.

In my constituency, there is a problem. If there is a level crossing where manning is to be done or installation of inter-locking system has to be done, and if it happened to be a deposit work, the municipalities and the panchayats which are suffering from fund constraint are asked to make the contribution and then construct the work. How can they do it?

MR. SPEAKER: The next speaker, Shri Sohan Potai to speak now.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Sir, just a minute. Let me conclude. Please give one minute.

MR. SPEAKER: Not one minute, but one sentence. the concluding sentence.

SARDAR SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN (Sangrur): Sir, am I permitted to lay my speech on the Table of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: Yes, you will be allowed to place your speech on the Table of the House. If there are other Members also who would like to lay their speeches on the Table of the House, they are permitted.

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Sir, just allow me for one sentence.

Regarding the MPLAD scheme, even when we are prepared to shell out funds in the name of passenger amenities, when it is not passenger amenities, it is not granted by the Railways. I request the hon. Minister to take a note of this.

The last thing I would like to say is that several of the ongoing works are not in a position to be completed in the near future because only very little amount of a few lakhs of rupees is allotted for them.

Then, there is a four-decade old demand of northern part of Kerala for Tellicherry Naachangod line. It is not actually included. I would request very earnestly that this line should be included in the Budget for the year 2003-2004.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAM SINGH KASWAN (Churu): Sir, the Rail Budget, 2003-2004 presented by the hon. Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumarji is a balanced one and in conformity with the prevailing situation in the country and does not put burden on any class of the society. Fare and freight have not been enhanced. Besides, relief has been provided to a number of classes of the society. This budget has been acclaimed by all and sundry of our society.

No budget can be better than that of the present one keeping in view the present serious economic condition of the country. But there are certain important problems in my parliamentary constituency which are to be included in the rail budget to this year for their immediate redressal.

The provision of necessary funds has not been made in the rail Budget of this year for the conversion of meter gauge line of Rewari-Bikaner, Sadulpur-Hissar, Ratnagarh-Degana route into the broad gauge line. Gauge conversion

has already been sanctioned for Rewari-Sadulpur, Sadulpur-Hissar route. But there is a feeling of disappointment in my Parliamentary Constituency because there is no provision of funds in this budget for it. Bikaner district has its strategic importance as it is adjacent to the border of Pakistan. The traders of my constituency frequently visit to the other major cities of the country. The oil from Kandla passes through Jodhpur, Degana, Ratnagarh-Sadulpur-Hissar before finally reaching Haryana or Punjab. Keeping in view all the aforesaid reasons in mind the gauge conversion of railway line of this area is very very essential.

A survey was conducted for laying of a new railway line between Churu to Taranagar, Sardarshahar to Hanumangarh, Seekar to Nokha via Salasar. Inauguration of this survey was also been done but desired results have not been come forth as yet and no provision for funds has been made in this budget for this purpose.

There is a long pending demand for extension of Bikaner-Churu 1/2 B.C. Passenger train up to Sadulpur junction. The extension of the same is absolutely necessary in the public interest.

The most serious problem of my Parliamentary Constituency is regarding lack of a railway level crossing. Due to the absence of a railway crossing, a number of accidents occur every year. The rural public has to face a number of difficulties. The department of Railways has closed a number of rural roads which were in operation for past several years. Today, every farmer has its own camel-cart, tractor, jeep, etc. In the absence of a railway-crossing they have to face great difficulties in their movement. On the Delhi-Bikaner Railway line under the Bikaner division there is no railway crossing near Bebad-Bhojan station, Gungalawa Kirtan, Harpal station, Kandhran-Dokwa, Hariyal, Molisar, Payali, Bigga Benisar, Sudsur villages and there is no railway crossing between Khasoli and Ramsara also. Due to the absence of a railway crossing near the Loha, Bhojasar, Padihara, Balasmand etc. villages on the Ratnagarh-Degana route near the Lasedi Indasar village on Sadulpur-Hissar route near Paharsar Handiavas Dhani small (Sidhmukh) villages Sadulpur-Hanumangarh route, the rural public has to face a number of great difficulties. A threat of accident always prevails there. I had written a letter to DRM, Jodhpur for providing Rs. 10 lakhs from the Member of Parliament fund for the construction of a manned railway crossing at Km. 336/6-7 near Loha Halt of Ratnagarh station and also a manned railway crossing at Km 3904 railway gate No. 46 between Balsamand and Sanwrad under Jodhpur division of Northern Railways, but no action has been

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Ram Singh Kaswan]

taken so far on that letter. The estimate that has been given for constructing a manned railway crossing near Loha station is very high and against the rules. The construction of the said two railway crossing is absolutely necessary for this area. Therefore, I humbly request you to construct these railway crossing without any further delay. I am ready to provide Rs. ten lakh from the development quota of my Parliamentary Constituency.

It is absolutely necessary to open Anandwasi halt station on Ratangarh-Sardarshahar railway route, Jaisalsar halt station between Bigga-Shri Dungargarh, Benisar halt station between Shri Dungargarh-Soodsar keeping in view the demand of the public and its urgent necessity. It is absolutely necessary to provide a stoppage to Link Express at Rampura Bairy Station between Loharu-Sadulpur junction.

At the end, I support the budget presented by the hon. Minister of Railways.

[English]

*SARDAR SIMRANJIT SINGH (Sangrur): Sir, on behalf of the combined strength of the Shiromani Akali Dal, the principal political party of the Sikh peoples, I wish to state that we three members of the Akali Dal Sardar Tarlochan Singh Tur, Sardar Zona Singh Mann and I welcome to efforts of the Hon'ble Railway Minister to give a common touch all over the country for imposing the least burden on the people.

However, the Akali Dal wishes to state that the present budget has not made any investment in the Punjab. My recommendation is that a railway track be laid between Amritsar and Ferozepore. By doing so the Indian Railway will be laying a ring along the Punjab border with Pakistan. This will be of great military strategic importance to the country from the defence angle. Moreover it will provide an alternative railway link from Delhi to Jammu and Kashmir. Having just one link to Jandk is risky in these days of sensitivity as it can be badly cut off through sabotage. The new route will be economically viable both freight and passenger-wise.

Secondly I would plead that the double landing of the railway track from Rajpura via Bhatinda and terminating in Ferozepore should be speeded up, so that we have more trains on this route.

Thirdly I plead that the laying of the railway track from Chandigarh to Ludhiana be expedited and completed before the year runs out.

I would also request that sanitary and catering services in our stations in the Punjab be brought up to meet world standards. The stations need renovations. The stations and railway tracks need to be kept neat and clean as thousands of NRI's and foreigners visit the Punjab. The filth and dirt leaves a bad taste and a poor impression about India.

I request railway traffic to Lahore in Pakistan be started afresh to facilitate trade, commerce, tourism and religious pilgrimage as about 280 religious shrines of the Sikhs are in Pakistan. As per the Laiqat-Nehru pact Sikh Jathas of pilgrims can visit their holy shrines four items each year. We have a Muslim population in Malerkotla in my constituency, who have their relatives in Pakistan. On humanitarian grounds they have to have cheap facilities to visit their kith and kin there.

Lastly I request that the Sachkand Express makes a halt at Sirhind junction. The Dhauladhar Express should go through Amritsar to its destination to Pathankot to facilitate the Sikhs of the Malwa region to go on pilgrimage to their holy city Amritsar. It is also the wish of the people that the Dhauladhar Express stop at Ahmedgarh and Malerkotla railway stations so as to enable the traders and passengers of this area to visit Delhi and Amritsar.

I emphatically oppose the proposal of the member of the treasury benches to wind up the Railway Board and make it one of the departments of the Government of India. This is a typical proposal of the I.A.S. mind which wishes to monopolise all power without providing probity, efficiency, transparency and accountability. I also want the computerisation for booking at important railway stations to be completed at the earliest in the Punjab.

[Translation]

SHRI SOHAN POTAI (Kanker): Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for permitting me to speak on the Railway Budget. I, support the railway budget for the year 2003-2004, presented by the honourable Railway Minister on 26th February, 2003. Infact this budget is certainly a far sighted budget. In this budget the feelings of the general public have been taken into consideration and as such no burden has been put on them. It will not be exaggerated if I say, that this is the best budget ever presented by the Governments since independence. I congratulate the Honourable Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar for it.

Sir, Several facilities have been provided in this Budget without putting additional burden on any one. No

*Speech was laid on the Table.

increase has been made in railway fares and freights. 50 new trains are to be introduced, the frequency of 13 trains are to be increased and 24 trains are likely to be extended in this budget. Relaxation has been given to senior citizens by reducing the age from 65 to 60 years. Concession in fares has been provided to the patients suffering from cancer and other diseases. There is a proposal to solve the unemployment problem in this budget which is certainly a welcome step.

Sir, often rail accidents frequently take place. The proposal made in this budget to prevent these accidents is certainly a welcome step. Besides, giving relief to the general public, efforts have been made to provide relief to the industrial sector also. I once again thank the Prime Minister and the Railway Minister for this good cause.

Sir, though the Minister has provided several facilities to the Chhattisgarh State but I have some complaints. There is a railway line from Dalli Rajhara-Jagdarpur in this tribal area which was sanctioned in the year 1995-96 and allocation was made for it on priority basis in the railway budget for the year 2000-2001. This project was included in the performance budget February 2000 but the same has been not included in this year's budget. This project was to be completed with the co-operation of 'SAIL' Railways and the State Government. There was a joint agreement on this proposal with the Madhya Pradesh Government. Under this agreement the construction work of Dalli-Raoghat route was to be done by SAIL and for the rest of the route rupees 75 crore at 7% interest was to be provided by 'SAIL' and was to be adjusted by providing concession in the freight charges. The State Government was to provide land costing Rupees 25 crore free of cost and the balance amount was to be provided by the Railways. These details are given in the said agreement but no progress has been made on this project as on date.

Sir, Chhattisgarh State was created in the same year but no action has been taken in this regard so far. If this project is completed thousands of unemployed youths of this region will get employment. There will be an all-round development of this backward region and this project will be a boon for this region I would like to know from the honourable Minister whether any concrete co-operation have been expended by the Chhattisgarh State Government in starting and completing this project or not? Sanction may kindly be accorded to Dalli-Rajhara-Jagdarpur project. Durg-Dalli-Rajhara passenger train, which starts at 7.00 in the evening reaches Dalli-Rajhara at around 11.30 in the night due to which very few passengers travel by this train. If this train starts at

4.00 O'clock in the evening from Durg it is obvious that more passengers will travel by this train and it will increase the revenue also. There will be no question of any losses. Sanction may kindly be accorded to the gauge conversion of Raipur-Dhamtari and that line may be connected to Goodredahi so that there can be a regular flow of traffic up to Dalli-Rajhara. The Sambalpur Express may be extended up to Kirandul because number of people go there for service. If the said train is extended it will facilitate the passengers travelling from Puri. That is why this project may be included in this year's Railway Budget.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, our Railway Minister is a very sensitive and generous. I had urged upon him to provide the facility of computerisation of Railway reservation at Dalli-Rajhara within three months and he has come upto my expectations. With the same hope I urge upon the Minister to kindly include these four demands also in his revised proposal for railway budget.

[English]

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Coochbehar): Sir, I may be permitted to lay my speech on the Table of the House.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Amar Roy Pradhan is allowed to lay his speech on the Table of the House. Along with that, the speeches of three other hon. Members, that is, Shri Simranjit Singh Mann, Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel, and Shrimati Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo, are allowed to be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

*PROF. S.P. SINGH BAGHEL (Jalesar): Sir, while expressing my views on the Railway Budget, I would like to submit that fare of Shatabdi A.C. and Rajdhani trains has been reduced in this budget. It would have been better if the fare of sleeper class was reduced. The facility of toilets must be provided in the E.M.U. trains and the number of general bogies in express trains must be increased.

Sir, the work of Guna-Itawa line should be completed earlier. Similarly additional funds should be provided for the Itawa-Mainpuri line.

Sir, I would like to put forward some of the problems of my Parliamentary Constituency. A halt of Shatabdi Express may be provided at Tundla railway station as it

[Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel]

is a historical city and is only 25 km. away from Agra. If a halt is provided, 20 lakhs people of Agra can be benefited. They would be able to board Shatabdi Exp. from Tundla. Similarly if a halt of Neelanchal Express is provided at Tundla the people of Agra, Tundla, Mayagarh, Firozabad, Aitmadpur, Verhan, most of whom are the followers of Jain religion and who often go to Jain pilgrimage Centre, Shikharjee, can be benefitted and they can get a direct train from Tundla to Shikharjee. Sir, the halt of Purshottam Express and some of the Mail Trains must be provided at Tundla. A halt of Avadha Express may be provided at Aitmadpur. An overbridge or under bridge may be constructed on the eastern and western crossings of Tundla Station, so that there can be a free flow of the traffic, when the gates are closed. The reservation quota for A.C. and sleeper class at Agra for Avadha Express, Marudhar Express and Jodhapur-Hawarah may be increased. It would be more better if a bogie of 2nd class sleeper and 20 births of A.C. are reserved at Agra. An over bridge at Agra cant station may be constructed. The status of Tundla Railway Hospital may be upgraded. M.R. Inter college may be made a Degree college. Tundla Etah passenger train may be run even on Saturdays and Sundays.

Sir, Tundla-Etah rail line, which runs through Berhan may be extended upto Kasganj. Although this distance is not more than 30 km. But Etah district will be connected with Bareilly, Lucknow and Kanpur. A rail bus may be run between Tundla-Etah. The reservation quota at Tundla, Firozabad, Agra cant and Agra Fort for all the trains may be increased. Hathras may be connected with Agra by a rail line via Sadabad-Khandouli.

Sir, halt of all the Rajdhani Express trains and Tamilnadu Express may be provided at Agra cant station. Sir, there were incidents of train dacoity since last two months. Arrangements may be made to safe guard the passengers. A railway crossing may be constructed at Ajmatgunj.

Sir, a number of persons who have worked as casual labours for years in railways, they have been removed from the service. They should once again be given a chance to join service—Railway porters may be provided winter uniforms.

Sir, S.T.D. booths may be opened at each platforms of Agra cant and Tundla railway station. Compensation to the 25 people, who died due to the collapse of locoshed at Tundla station may be given immediately.

[English]

*SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Coochbehar): Thanks for giving me the opportunity to make a brief speech on Railway Budget.

At the outset, I would like to mention that I am very much frustrated with the present Railway Budget, when I look at the N.F. Railway Zone. I would like to confine myself with the N.F. Railway Zone as this is the most neglected Railway Zone in the Railway Map.

It was announced in the last Rail Budget that the Rajdhani Express from New Delhi to Guwahati will be operating all the seven days in a week, i.e. daily, but I am sorry to say that it has not yet been made daily even after elapse of complete one year. Is it not a negligence on the part of railways. It clearly shows the behaviour of railways towards N.F. Railway Zone.

Regarding electrification you have already stated that 25% of the total railway line of 63, 140 route Kms, have already been electrified. It means that the Passenger/ Good Trains will move more fastly.

To play the desired social and developmental role of railways don't you think that N.F. Railway should also be electrified. But till date, there is not even a single meter railway line electrified.

Regarding the question of double line, this zone is most neglected. Only a portion from Malda to New Jalpaiguri the facility of double line have been provided. Once and again I have stated that atleast the single existing B.G. Line from New Jalpaiguri to Rani Nagar be doubled for comfortable journey of passengers, for convenient movement of Rajdhani, Mail & Express Trains which are the long distance trains running on this line.

Regarding the new Railway line from New Moinaguri to Jogigappa, this time only 25 crores have been allotted for this project. When the total cost of the project is 733 crores, 25 crores is a too small amount. Under the leadership of Shri Chandi Pal, Joint Convenor of this new Railway Line, we met you twice. Not only this, but I myself personally talked to you about this project. This new railway line will be a lifeline for North Bengal, Sikkim and North Eastern States. The present rail line, which is moving through forest area, including some terrorist areas. Already there is an Order of Hon'ble High Court that no train or buses should move more than 40 Kms and should not disturb the Environmental and ecological balance of

wild life say Tiger Projects, Elephant projects, Rhino Projects. Moreover, this is also a flood prone area. So new Railway line from New Moinaguri to Jogigappa, which will prevent the Trains passing through the forest/terrorist/ flood prone areas, where you are presently forced to run the trains during daytime only. This new line will ultimately have to be double line, but I am sorry to say that you have not paid any heed to this project in this Railway Budget. I, therefore, insist that atleast 100 crores of rupees should be allocated for this particular project.

During our discussion with you, the point relating to conversion of New Mal to Changrabandha MG Line to BG Line was also discussed and you assured that this job will be got done, but it is regretted that no work for this has been started till date.

Conversion of another MG Line to BG Line from New Coochbehar to Geetaldaha should be taken up immediately as presently it is a too busy line.

When New Jalpaiguri to New Alipurduar gauge conversion work is going on and we don't know when it will be completed, it is really surprising that you have announced three new trains-(i) New Alipurduar-Siliguri (Daily); (ii) New Alipurduar-New Jalpaiguri (Daily); and (iii) New Jalpaiguri-Siliguri (Daily); with a remark "after gauge conversion". Moreover, I feel that by making such an announcement New Jalpaiguri-Siliguri Daily Train of short-distance train of hardly 3 Kms, the public may very well understand that such an announcement is a joke for them. So please don't make such a joke with public.

Once and again I told you for extension of Delhi-Siliguri-Mahananda Link Express upto Haldibari in the public interest. When at Haldibari PIT Head arrangements are there and sufficient years space is there, then you have not extended this train upto Haldibari. I hope that you will consider this issue at the time of reply and accede to this request of public.

I told you also regarding a Foot Overbridge at Haldibari Railway Station, where due to non-availability of such facility, the commuters are facing hardship and they are compelled to cross through the railway lines which is risky for passengers. Only one level crossing is there which is not sufficient for more than one and half lakh people. I am confident that you will take note of it and get this facility provided at Haldibari Railway Station.

The points regarding Half First Ac coach with Teesta Torsha Express and Full First AC coach with Darjeeling Mail had already been discussed with you. Non-availability of First AC Coach or less quota of First AC berths results

to inconvenience not only to Ministers or MPs, but to the Businessmen as well as Indian and Foreign Tourists travelling in these trains.

While welcoming the proposal for Chitpore Terminus at Kolkata, I think it will take atleast three years for its completion. So far the time-being to minimize the congestion in Kolkata city as well as Sealdah Railway Station, a stoppage at Dum-Dum Railway Station for Darjeeling Mail and Teesta Torsha Express is very much essential in public interest. I am confident that you will pass necessary orders for the purpose at the earliest.

At the end, Indian Railway being a public utility service and in the interest of Social and National Integration, I would like to request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to pay his personal attention; financial assistance and other necessary help for the most neglected railway zone, i.e., N.F. Railway. Please don't forget the areas like Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar, which are the Gateways for Northeastern States. Hence, I hope that you will take care of the passengers as well as goods movements by providing more new lines/routes/trains etc. in N.F. Railway.

*SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO (Bolangir): Sir, I would like to congratulate the Hon'ble Minister of Railways on a very comprehensive budget. I would also like to thank you immensely for the following projects to be undertaken in my constituency, Bolangir, They are:-

1. Khurda Road-Bolangir Railway line (289km) 15 crores.
2. Doubling of the line between Titilagarh-Lanjigarh Road (47km) 16 crores.
3. Signalling-Telecom works:
 - a. Jharsuguda-Titilagarh 1 crore.
 - b. Bolangir-Rayagada 90 lacs.

I would also like to put forth the following demands of the people of my constituency:

1. Extension of Puri-Sambalpur Passenger Train to Titilagarh in order to facilitate the people to visit the city of Lord Jagannath.
2. Few Sleeper Coaches of Rayagada-Sambalpur Express Train may kindly be attached with the Tapaswini Express Train at Sambalpur.

[Shrimati Sangeeta Kumari Singh Deo]

3. Nizamuddin-Bhubaneswar (via Sambalpur 8407 and 8408) Express Train kindly be split up at Sambalpur and a part thereof kindly be run up to Rayagada. If not, some sleeper Coach kindly be attached with Samaleswari Express or Kantabanji-Bilaspur passenger train upto Sambalpur which had initially been provided and withdrawn later on.
4. Running of D.M.U. Train from Titlagarh to Sambalpur.
5. Running of an Express Train from Jharsuguda to Nagpur via Bolangir & Titlagarh.
6. Puri-Ahmedabad and Bhubaneswar-Kurla Express Train running via Sumbalpur once a week kindly be run 4 times a week.
7. Running of an Express train from Rayagada to Sambalpur in the morning hour.
8. Provision for stoppage of all Express Trains kindly be made at Bolangir Road Station.

I would also like to request you to raise the budgetary allocation for the Khurda-Bolangir Rail line to 50 crores at least.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Speaker, Sir, our Railway Minister is claiming that he has celebrated the 150th year of Railways in a very grand way. There has been a demand for a railway line from Hazipur-Vaishali-Sugouli since 1904. A survey was conducted during the Britisher's regime. Who ever became the Railway Minister got a survey conducted but nothing has been done on this project.

[English]

Where there is a will there is a railway. Where there is no will there is a survey.

[Translation]

Infact this saying has been proved by this. Vaishali is the birth place of Lord Mahaveer, Lord Buddha played his role in this land. It is the land of democracy. Infact the initial concept of democracy survived in this land. The world's biggest 'stupa' was found at Kesaria. All these historical places are far away from the railway line. The hon'ble Railway Minister had got conducted a survey of this area. This project is of rupees 324 crore. There is no scarcity of funds.

[English]

Whether there is a will there is a railway.

[Translation]

We can get funds from O.E.C.F. Because Budha circuit will be incomplete without a railway line. Every where there is a demand for the construction of railway lines and there should always be a demand for the same. Honourable Members give vent to the expectations of the public and one thing I can prove that the people of the region get utmost happiness, where a railway line is constructed.

Previously Planning Commission did not give its consent, but now it has approved it in principle. But it is not clear whether appraisal is undertaken or not. In reality, where the Ministry is interested in laying a line, there will not be any excuses but if it is not interested they will put forward a number of excuses. The same is the fate of our project. There is resentment among the people. We have placed our demand in all the budget, whether it was General or Supplementary Budget but nothing has been done so far. Some times I feel what is to be done to get our project cleared. Injustice is being done to the people of that area we thought of staging Satyagraha in front of Shri Nitish Kumar ji or the Prime Minister but it would be better if we stage a dharna in front of you. I feel, this is only the way to meet our demands. National poet Shri Dinkarji has said:

'Vaishali Jan Ka Pratipalak, Jan Ka aaj vidhata,
Jisey Khojta desh aaj, us prajatantra Ki Mata,
Ruko pathik, ek Kishan, mitti ko Shish navao.
Rajsidhi ki Samadhi par phool chadhatey jao.'

This is the importance of democracy in Vaishali but how can we prove this now. The Tourism Department has also communicated with the Railway Ministry to lay railway line in this area. Infact the Department has highlighted this fact that this area has very much potential. When Historian Dr. Altekar got excavation in the year 1956 the 'Asthkalash' of Lord Budha was found in this area.

On the 600th birth day of Lord Mahaveer the Prime Minister announced that we would spend Rupees 100 crore for the development of the birth place of Lord Mahaveer. We could get rupees 4.5 crore only. But unless and until this area is connected with railway line the aspirations of the public of that area will not be fulfilled.

It has been mentioned in the budget that the number of trains have been increased. But in proportion to the increase in population the percentage of passengers is decreasing. What is the reason for this decrease? Last year, there was a net profit of 36% which has declined to 10.8% this year. I leave this important issue for the learned Members, who will give their reaction over this. But I want to raise one important issue. We have been listening about the Railway development schemes and security schemes. It came to our knowledge that only 2% of the funds will be spent on these schemes. What sort of railway development and security scheme it is due to apprehension of railway accidents the number of passengers are declining. The Railway Ministry should consider the reasons for the decrease in the percentage of passengers. Since Hajipur-Vaishali and Sugouli has not been connected with railway there is a lot of unrest among the people of this area. When are you going to lay the foundation stone for this project? I do not know, what the expanded Board and C.C.A. is going to decide but if the Minister wants this can be done immediately, but I know, this will not be done. *...(Interruptions)* Planning Commission has given its consent on this project. Now they are giving an excuse that an appraisal is to be done. We have contacted the Appraisal and Management Division of Planning Commission. We feel this division is putting hindrance over this project. What we want to say is that if the Minister wants, there will not be any such formalities or hindrances and the work can be done. Law comes in our way only. Our people say that we do not try hard enough so the work is not done. Now we will do things in such a manner so that people are convinced that we are trying hard. It appears that there is some complication therein.

Hon'ble Minister had announced the supply of the 'Rail Neer'. When we travel by train, we do not know the kind of water we get to drink. That does not taste good. The testing has now revealed that all those waters are not fit to drink. "Rail Neer" was to be introduced last year itself *...(Interruptions)*. It has been introduced. Daily almost one crore passengers are drinking that water. I have to say that daily one crore plastic bottles were littered along the railway track which is causing pollution. *...(Interruptions)*

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH (Motihari): Mr. Speaker, Sir, there is a great problem with the food and water available in Bihar Legislative Assembly *...(Interruptions)*

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Now can he raise here the issue against Legislative Assembly. *...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You can not raise issue against Legislative Assembly.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: These two problems exist in Bihar. Whatever he has said is correct. *...(Interruptions)*

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: You should be aware if this because of Hajipur, Vaishali and more than half of the area of Sugauli falls in his constituency. He has no interest in that. He is interested in Legislative Assembly. Here there is no provision to raise issue against Legislative Assembly. *...(Interruptions)* Hon'ble Minister should now tell that what steps he is going to take to control pollution being created by one crore plastic bottle wastage.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, here no one pays attention to me. People from my constituency demand that the train starting from Bandra should be given stoppage in Motipur but it is not being done. No one pays attention so we face a lot of problems. There is a Thermal Power Station at Kanti. There is Block Headquarters also. There runs one intercity train which stops at all Block Headquarters except Kanti. Once the situation is analyzed it will found that there is discrimination. Kanti Thermal Power Station is situated near Mujaffarpur. There intercity train arrives from west whenever there is a divisional headquarters, it stops everywhere but not at Kanti. Bandra train should stop at Motipur station.

Likewise Sapta Kranti train has been introduced, we had also attended inauguration ceremony. We all were very happy. I also thanked the minister for that.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: You were very late in congratulating me. *...(Interruptions)*

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: I, normally don't congratulate. I shall congratulate you after the completion of new Hajipur Railway Line. It is a job of 100 years. Once history was made by Lord Buddha. Once you complete it then you will also have your place in the annals of history. If you discriminate with me, than you will also be removed like those railway ministers who did not keep their words. Likewise Britishers have also left the country. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan jee also left the job after survey. He could not complete it. The Minister who did not keep his words, his own seat remains in danger. You should know this fact. I demand that you inaugurate the same on priority basis in October by taking Prime Minister jee with you. There is Nariyar station

[Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

...(Interruptions). There is Nariyar station alongwith railway crossing. Earlier it was a manned crossing. Now personnel have been withdrawn. One Indrajeet Sahni was going with his tractor. The railway crossing was not closed. He collided with train and lost his life. He lost his tractor also. Indrajeet Sahni died. I went there. I wrote a letter also. What action has been taken so far? I don't know whether any action has been taken or not.

Sir, labourers, who travells by train, are subjected to exploitation. Labourers from my own constituency or labourers from Punjab or Haryana or anywhere else travels in search of job. Many labourers use train to travel but they are very much exploited in passenger and express trains. In general boggie at Gorakhpur extortion (Rangsari) takes place. The labourers and passengers from there have complained that a lot of hooligonism takes place there. ...(Interruptions)

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.): There is more hooligonism in Delhi. I belong to Gorakhpur. There is nothing like that ...(Interruptions)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: People from there have complained it to me. Please get an enquiry conducted by officers of RPF. Those people who travel from there have made a complaint to me that exploitation and humiliation takes place there. Please have a check on that. Those labourers who travel by train should not be exploited. The matter should be investigated to stop the exploitation of those labourers who save some money by curtailing the basic necessities as they are harassed on the way.

A rail line has been constructed near Bagah-Chhatauni. People cry that is destroying the environment. A day will come when the Supreme Court will issue a notice to Hon'ble Minister. There is a forest area of 1500 acres. Water logging took place there. Earlier the bridge was along the rail line, so there was way for water outlet. Now Railway line has been constructed without the provision of bridge. Because of this, I have seen personally that a very dense forest cover of 1500 acres comprising teakwood was destroyed completely due to water logging. So there must be a provision for bridge so that the water which gushes in from North should not get logged up there and there should not be a single unmanned crossing. So that accidents can be avoided. Department of Railways must pay attention towards this issue.

Lastly I come to the question of coolies. Coolies have given statement that there is nothing for them in

this budget. Coolies belong to the down trodder category of society. Coolies carry the baggage of passengers who can not carry that baggage with due to prestige or they are unable to lift their own luggage. But there is no provision for those coolies in this budget.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA: Are you talking about coolies with red uniform or with Blue uniform ...(Interruptions)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: I am talking about the coolies who lifts your luggage. Who has been issued with uniform. I want that they should be categorised as class IV employee and be given the education and other facilities also. So the Hon'ble Minister should pay kind attention to the condition of coolies.

Now about the contract system in Railways. All Dons and Dacoits grab most of the contract. This is the report that our Dacoit who have formed their own company. So the quality and safety of railway will be affected. How an engineer can prevent a dacoit from loot? The Government must take care of this problem otherwise all the contracts will be grabbed by the outlaws. They never allow them work to submit. DOQ and suateh it due to which they face a lot of problems. So the department of railway must bring progress in the development works.

Lastly I make a demand to the Government, to the finance department and to the Prime Minister that since railway is our life-line for national integrity and for national development, it must get sufficient budgetary support. So that the expectations of the people can be fulfilled and country can develop through rail. We have celebrated 150th anniversary of railway with zeal but the development of railway has not taken place upto expected level. General passengers have not got the desired facilities. One of the reasons for this is the competition it faces from bus and other means of transportation. Very few people travel by train in USA, because there roads are in excellent condition. Despite roads not being in excellent condition, the number of those who prefer to travel by train is decreasing gradually. So the Hon'ble minister must make an announcement today itself or I will start a movement. Buddhist Stupas have been found in Areraj and Kesaria and there is a temple of Lord Shiva also, where lakhs of people come to pray the God. That is a place of historical and cultural importance. The proposed railway line should be completed there as per people's expectation. Local people will be elated and lakhs of people who visit that place will be facilitated. So I demand that construction of the proposed railway line must be completed at the earliest.

[English]

SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY (Chidambaram): Sir, I may be permitted to lay my speech.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Ponnuswamy is permitted to lay his speech.

*SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY (Chidambaram): Sir, I am indeed very happy to congratulate our Hon'ble Railway Minister for his brilliant and people friendly budget which has no comparisons with the previous Budget.

Sir, the Budget has been acclaimed by one and all cutting across the party lines though a few of the main opposition party has called it an election budget.

Sir, I think that they would prepare such a purposeful Budget only when they think or go for elections but our NDA Govt. and our Hon. Ministers always have people in mind and heart not the election whenever they perform such milestones.

Sir, it is possible that not always all regions get all the projects needed. I can understand the constraints our Hon. Minister faces while taking such giant steps to meet the needs of the people.

But I would like to bring to Hon. Minister's kind attention a few needs of Tamil Nadu and particularly, one or two places, in Tamil Nadu.

Firstly, Sir, in my constituency Chidambaram, a railway crossing bridge is a crying need and all the formalities upto tender stage for 10.50 crores have been completed two years back. But I don't know what has happened to this. I request our Hon. Railway Minister to kindly grant funds immediately as it would help thousands of people and students of Annamalai University to solve their ordeal of hours of waiting to go to their duty on time and back home. Even patients taken to Hospitals for urgent treatment also are facing difficulties. Hence I request Hon. Minister to grant this on humanitarian grounds.

Secondly, Sir a new line from Kanchipuram to Thidivanam via Vandavasi my native place, a Taluq Hq & major S.G. Town Panchayat, has been sanctioned in 1999-2000 budget and ordered for survey be completed before 31.3.2001. I have also written to Ms. Mamtaji and the present Minister several letters on this and I am yet to get a positive reply. As this is a business centre, and the private bus fleet owners are having a roaring business at the cost of common man, I request our Hon. Minister

to kindly sanction this project of new line and earn the goodwill and blessings of these poor people who are really backbone of our democracy.

Sir, thirdly, the total Budget amount by Receipts is 43,495 crores out of which the expenditure works out to 32,460 crores, though total working expenditure is 40,850 crores. Out of this T.N. should get atleast 1500 crores and S.Rly. 7200 crores approximately. But, Sir, the estimated amount for all the on going and new projects is 2273.62 crores and the allocation for 2002-2003 & 2003-2004 is only 781.97 crores, thus leaving a gap of 1492 crores to be met with. I request Hon. Minister to allocate this nearly 1500 crores for this year for Tamil Nadu projects.

With these words, Sir, I applaud and appreciate the performance of the Hon. Minister and his team including Sri A.K. Moorthy, our party representative in the Govt. who always does his best on the passengers facilities in Tamil Nadu and other parts of the country.

(Translation)

KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI (Washim): Mr Speaker, Sir I thank the Minister of Railways for presenting such a good railway budget to the people of India. There is no increase in freight or fare. In this budget some good decision have been taken for senior citizens also. Yesterday you took one more decision not to charge one side fare from the persons who are appearing for interview in railways. This also has been included in the railway budget. This is a very good budget for the people of every level.

I would like to tell two or three things to the Hon'ble Minister of Railways. I shall raise the safety concern first. In Mumbai around six to seven month back, one handicapped girl was raped in a local train because there was no security arrangement. People travelling in the train did not come for her rescue. That girl committed suicide. Not only this I would like to remind the Minister that as I have read in a magazine "Marmik" also, that passengers who have travelled by Palamu Express starting from Patna are attacked, looted and sometimes shot at too. An officer named V. Prasad posted in Gaya has told that they can not even go for checking tickets wearing uniform. Such is the pitiable condition there. So I want that security measure needs to be considered at larger scale.

Lots of land of Railway are lying unused. If Railway gives that land on lease it can earn a good revenue and increase its income.

[Kumari Bhavana Pundlikrao Gawali]

17.00 hrs.

Sir, once we pass through railway stations we find goods of railway scattered in the open. Hon'ble Minister must think in this direction also that how those goods can be utilized those to earn revenue. So many hon'ble member among us have advocated for the privatisation of railway catering services and other services. I oppose this. If privatisation of catering service starts then other services will also be privatised. This should not happen. If it happened our railway which is ranked second in the world and is running so well will deteriorate and we will have to face lot of problems. So I want that there should not be any privatisation move in railways.

Sir Purna-Akola rail line passing through my constituency Washim was to be converted into broad gauge from meter gauge in the year 2000-2001. In the first year rupees 10 crores were allocated for the work and Rs. 10 crore was allotted in second year also and for this year Rs. 15 crores have been allocated. My question is that if we continue to allocate Rs. 10 crore yearly like this then how much time will it consume because the cost of whole project is Rs. 228 crores. ...*(Interruptions)* I don't know whether I will be alive or dead till the period is completed.

MR. SPEAKER: I assure you, you will remain alive till the project is completed.

KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to request hon'ble Minister through you that the present provision of Rs. 35 crores may please be enhanced to Rs. 100 crores. In our culture and tradition women command high respect and I am also a woman. So I hope the Minister to pay respect to my words and will made more and more provision for the said project. This is my kind request to him. ...*(Interruptions)* In this way he will pay respect to all woman Members of the House alongwith me and will allocate more and more funds for their constituencies.

It taken too much time for allotment of fund for the works of gauge conversion be it meter gauge or broad gauges. I request that a master plan should be prepared in which this work should be finished within three to five years.

My constituency does not have the computerised reservation facility, this facility should be provided there. Alongwith, this quota in A.C. and sleeper compartment in Vidarbha Express and Hawra Mumbai Mail should be increased. The destination of super Delux Howrah-Kurla Express is Kurla. I request you to introduce a train from

Kurla to Chhatrapati Shivajee Terminal. My demand is that more and more funds should be allocated for Purna-Akola. That train is nearly completing five years and I hope to travel in the train next time. My name too is Bhavana (feelings) so my feelings must be respected and I hope you to allocate more funds in the budget.

I conclude by supporting this Budget and thanking you.

*SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Sir, this year's budget presented by the Railway Minister has been intelligently manipulated. The fares of the Rajdhani and Shatabdi Express have been lowered which are very comfortable trains having so many facilities. The reduction in the fares of these trains is upto 10%. The reduction by the Railway Minister in the freight is offset by Jaswant Singh's Budget. The situation of the Railways is such that the passenger fares are lower than the cost of running the trains resulting in loss of rupees 5000 crore annually. The reason behind reducing the fares of Rajdhani and Shatabdi Express is 3% decrease in the number of passengers travelling in these trains according to the last year's figures from April to December. This is because there is not much difference in the fares of these trains and the airfares. But there is a need to make other trains profitable also where the Railway Minister did not pay attention. This shows that while the Government cares about the rich class, it does not care for the poor. The Railway Minister claimed that there has been a decline in the train accidents in the last 3 years. It is important whether the accidents increased or decreased but more important is the extent to which there was recurrence of the causes of accidents. The causes of the accidents are almost similar. According to a survey there were 85% accidents due to human error, 6% due to equipment and 4% due to sabotage and 5% due to other reasons. The administration will have to be made accountable in order to check the accidents. No meaningful step is being taken in this direction rather lack of funds is cited as the reason for accidents. Last time, safety fund amounting to rupees 17000 crore was set up and it was said that the signal system, the communication system, the old tracks and the railway lines will be improved by it. It was assessed by the Government that 17000 km. long old tracks are accident prone while not even one thousand km. of these tracks has been repaired so far. If the tracks will be repaired at this speed then one will have to travel on these dangerous tracks in the next 32 years. The Government is not serious in checking train accidents. Whatever may be revealed by the figures but the fact is that here is hardly

*Speech was laid on the Table.

and day when the news of train accident is not appeared in the newspapers with the psychological effect on the people that they think that rail travel is not safe anymore.

Sir, there is need of an expenditure of rupees 40,000 crore on the projects of the Railway which are under construction. Last year, on 26 January a fund of rupees 15,000 crore was set up by the Government. It seems that we prepare now projects and even start working on it but do not put the effort required for completion of old pending projects.

Four years back, the Prime Minister Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee himself had inaugurated a new railway line from Agra to Etawah at Bateswar in Agra district in Uttar Pradesh. It is a good thing that new railway lines should be laid. But the problem is that this line starts from Bhadai village and the farmers whose land is being acquired are not getting proper compensation. According to the Government rates the cost of the land near the road is rupees 7,74,000 per hectare while that of the land away from the road is rupees 4,30,000 per hectare. It has created a severe crisis for the farmers of the village Siktara, Nagla Mikki, Iklashpura, Karondhana and Bah. The rate of the land acquired by the Railway has been fixed at only rupees 1,38,392 per hectare and the farmers are getting compensation at this rate only and that too the 80% only and no one knows when the remaining 20% will be given. Farmers had protested against it but it was said that their objection was not acceptable. The Bah tehsil has the least irrigated land. Farmers lost much of the land in the Chambal Dal Canal Project and now the Railways is acquiring the land. This implies that many farmers will become landless. In the eighties when a refinery was set up at Mathura in Uttar Pradesh, employment to one person from every family alongwith the compensation was given to the farmers. Similarly, when NTPC power station was set up in village Naufri in Agra, employment to one person each from the family of the farmers was also given alongwith compensation. They demanded from the Railway Minister for the payment of compensation for the land acquired from the farmers for the railway line from Madai to Etawah, according to the market rates and employment for one person from each family. They had also requested that the work of laying the tracks is going on while the crops is ready for harvest within a month. So, this work should be stopped until the farmer reaps his crop.

*SHRI ANANTA NAIK (Keonjhar): Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget 2003-2004. Sir, the hon'ble Minister

*Speech was laid on the Table.

has presented a passenger friendly budget with special attention to the middle class. There has been no increase in the fares of both the passenger and the goods trains. Even the fares of Rajdhani and Shatabdi Express have been decreased.

Sir, the hon'ble Minister has given special attention to the safety aspect of the trains. He has decided to fill up the 20,000 vacancies of the group 'D' staff like Gangman who come in the safety category. I appreciate the concern of the hon'ble Minister who has made this provision to check the growing rail accidents. All possible steps should be taken so that rail accidents can be checked completely. Each passenger should reach his destination safely. The hon'ble Minister spoke about the departure of passenger trains on time in his budget speech. It should also be ensured that all long distance trains run on time.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister towards checking the theft of passenger's luggage. Railway Police Force should be deployed in all the coaches for the security of the passengers and their luggage, if necessary. All kinds of thefts should be prevented in the running trains. This can be possible only when trespassing in reserved coaches is prohibited.

Now, I would like to throw light on some problems concerning my State Orissa. I am happy to hear the hon'ble Minister's announcement that the East-Coastal Railway will commence from 1st April, 2003. We all Members from Orissa had long been demanding to start East-Coastal Railway. But, unfortunately, this zone which is oldest among the seven new zones, which was inaugurated on 8 August, 1996, could not be commenced since then. I thank the hon'ble Minister for addressing this long pending demand. But only rupees 6 crore have been sanctioned for this project. It will be impossible to commence fully the East-Coastal Railway zone unless more funds are allocated for it. I hope that considering the necessary requirement of the State the hon'ble Minister will take necessary steps in this regard.

Sir, the length of railway line in Orissa State is 14.04 Km per thousand square Km while the national average is 19 Kms. The State of Orissa contributes 30% of the total revenue generated from traffic on South Eastern Railway which is adequate. Therefore the expansion of railway in the State is very much required. In this context, I would also like to dwell on the necessity of completing some ongoing projects in the State. In the absence of adequate railway infrastructure in the State, it is not possible to properly exploit mineral resources of the State

[Shri Ramji Lal Suman]

such as coal, iron, limestone, Bauxite, Manganese etc. Orissa is on the threshold of industrial revolution where a number of steel plants, aluminium plants and thermal power plants are being set up in various parts of the State.

In the last ten years, five new rail line projects were approved for the State. Most important among them was Jakhapura-Banspani line, where work was scheduled to start as early as after independence. But on this line, the first phase between Jakhapura and Daitari could be completed only in 1979 and after that it was opened for traffic. After that no effort was made to start the work for second phase between Daitari and Keonjhar and the third phase between Keonjhar and Banspani. Finally the 155 Km long Daitari-Banspani rail line was approved in the year 1992-93. At that time the estimated costs of the project was Rs. 595 crore. But the work could not be completed due to extremely small allocation. By March, 2001-2002 only Rs. 297 crore were spent on it, in the year 2002-2003, only Rs. 400 crore were sanctioned. Similarly, only Rs.75 crore were given in the year 2003-2004. The work of land acquisition has been completed since the day. I have won election, I have been emphasising on early completion of the work keeping in view its economic importance. But it is regrettable that proper attention was not given to complete this work early. Even the hon'ble Minister gives different reply on different occasions to questions relating to this project. In reply to questions asked by my colleague Shri Parshuram Manjhi and myself, hon'ble Minister said that the work of rail line has been completed between Banspani and Joruli and that between Joruli to Keonjhar would be completed by the year 2002-2003. But this work has not been completed so far. Every year, the same type of reply is given. Even hon'ble Minister has repeated the something in his budget speech. I do not know whether anyone in the Ministry is monitoring the work or not. It is a gross injustice to my Parliamentary constituency. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to personally monitor the project so that the entire project between Joruli and Daitari is completed at least in the Tenth plan.

I would also like to demand that a passenger train between Banspani and Tatanagar be started. People from all over India are working in the mining areas of my district especially in Joda and Barbil mining areas. Therefore, I demand for the provision of reservation for passengers of Keonjhar from Tatanagar in all the classes of all the trains leaving for Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkata.

Similarly the Jajpur-Keonjhar road station should have reservation quota in all the trains reaching Kolkata, Delhi and Chennai.

The demand for setting up big stations in Barbed and Banspani is gaining momentum. Such a small demand should be fulfilled at the earliest.

Sir, finally, I would request the hon'ble Minister for early completion of survey work of proposed Khurda road-Bolangir line. The work of Angul Sukinda rail line via Haridaspur-Paradip and Dubri should also be completed without delay.

Sir, I would be failing in my duty if I do not mention Rupsa-Bangiriposhi rail line of Orissa. The work of converting this line into broad gauge has been pending for the last many years. I had high hopes that hon'ble minister would increase funds allocation for this project. But the budget speech of hon'ble Minister has no mention of this. The people of this ignored part of Orissa were agitating against delay in the completion of this project. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to reconsider it so that the work of converting meter gauge of Rupsa-Bangiriposi into broad gauge is completed in the financial year 2003-2004.

With these words, I support the Railway Budget 2003-2004 and conclude my speech.

SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN (Baramulla): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank hon'ble Railway Minister for taking personal interest in Kashmir and being generous towards it. I am aware of the economic constraints being faced by his Minister and even then he tried not to burden common man with increased fares. I have full sympathy with him, but I would like to ask some questions regarding problems faced by our railway system. I would like to draw attention of the House towards a few things in this regard.

Sir, it is a matter of extreme pleasure for us that the second event of historical importance has taken place in Kashmir that initiatives have been taken to link the valley with the railway system of the country. First historical event was that when Jawahar tunnel was constructed through Banihal pass. It was said in those days that the robust mountain range which is started from Kajigund can not be broken and landslides occur in the softer Mountains and that mountain range is an obstacle in integration of Kashmir with the nation. But leaders of that time get the tunnel constructed by cutting across Banihal which gave rise to a new phase in the history of Kashmir. The second important event that is being controlled by our Railway Minister, under the guidance of hon'ble Prime Minister, is very crucial but here are also some question marks over it. We are talking about laying railway line between Baramulla in Kashmir to Kajigund. The question

that comes to mind is that in a small valley where it takes about two to two and a half hours to cover a distance of 150 kms, how it would be possible to construct rail line of 150 km of soft rocky region between Udhampur to Kajigund when we already know that soft rocks are an obstacle to even roads and we can have an idea as to how difficult it may be to construct railway lines. But in view of the technological advancements, if hon'ble Minister is able to arrange funds and it is started immediately then it may become another historical project for Kashmir valley.

Sir, in the last fifty years, Jammu has been linked with the railway system of the nation. But it was linked to the rest of the country even before our independence, following independence, the link had severed and we had to travel for many years, from Jammu to Pathankot. When the rail line become operational, it was a revolutionary step, but the issue of doubling of line between Jammu and Jalandhar is still hanging after 31 years. Though it has been approved by our Government, but there is need to arrange funds for that and work sincerely in that direction. It is not being done. I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Railway Minister towards the fact that nature has been generous to us in many ways. Kashmir valley is world famous for tourism, but presently there are some difficulties. We hope to get over those, Jammu has Vaishno Devi Shrine and this year 55 lakh Pilgrims have already arrived there. If the tourism in Kashmir is properly developed then the one crore domestic or foreign tourists will have to use Jammu station. They will come to Jammu via Jalandhar. But the absence of double line from Jammu to Jalandhar is an obstacle for the last 30-40 years. And afterwards, when we reach Jammu railway station we have to face a number of difficulties. Jammu Station where every year between 55 lakh to one crore persons come should be provided with all facilities and first priority be accorded to it. The second phase is now of railways. The project of extending rail line upto Udhampur is going on for the last 25 years, but so far upto Bajalata, that is, only 15-20 kms of line has been laid. We have been waiting for 31 years to see the completion of railway project of Udhampur. After Udhampur the second strategic project has been launched—between Udhampur and Katra—and there is no mention about the area which lies in between. Probably hon'ble Railway Minister in his speech would inform the House about the arrangements being made for the area laying in between which is most crucial part of the whole project. We are now extending rail line from Kajigund to Baramulla. Due to personal attention of hon'ble Railway Minister and the Prime Minister, the work has been expedited there in the last one year. But it is

surprising that when a work of such strategic and historical importance is underway, the railway administration did not think it proper to be in contact with local MPs or other important persons for the purpose of getting the comprehensive value of the project. In case of any obstruction at any stage, we could be of much help.

Sir, I would like to request the hon'ble Railway Minister to involve the MPs of Udhampur, Baramulla or Kashmir valley in these projects at any level. We can give suggestions in this connection. The area of Jammu and Poonch is very important. We may also talk on these areas.

Another important thing is that the share of recruitment from my area is very low, almost negligible. On a number of occasions, we have submitted that for the people who want to come for recruitment from remote areas should not be called for tests at far off stations where there are no facilities of boarding and lodging. I would like those tests to be held in either Jammu or in nearby centres of Punjab so that people of my State could get an opportunity to enter in railway services. The employment scenario in my State is very serious. Unemployment is the main reason of the existing security scenario of my State. And Railways is not extending the amount of help it could give. I request that appropriate steps be taken in this regard.

The most important issue is that due to absence of booking office in the remote areas of valley and also of Jammu, people have to suffer great hardships. The army and para military personnel, the persons working in Central Government offices, those in law and order services, defence personnel or the ordinary passengers are not getting this facility. Hon'ble Railway Minister in his budget speech has mentioned that this facility would be provided commonly. At present there is a booking office in Srinagar and another small office in army cantonment. The people coming from Kupwara, Baramulla, Tangdar, Gurez and those coming from higher reaches of Uri have to stay in Jammu for two days to get a ticket. Besides, there is also the issue of linking winter capital Jammu with Rajdhani Express—Running the train once a week can not be of help to the State. I would request the hon'ble Railway Minister to look into the matter. He should come forward to provide facilities to the passengers coming from my State.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Some hon. Members want to lay their speeches on the Table of the House. They are allowed to do so. This is for the information of the House.

DR. MANDA JAGANNATH (Nagar Kurnool): Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Railway

[Dr. Manda Jagannath]

Budget. I feel, in the recent past, this is a Budget which has kept in mind the needs of the common man. That is why I call it as a common man-friendly and common man-oriented Budget.

I think the hon. Minister of Railways must have had a very tough task in framing this Budget. I congratulate him whole-heartedly and also the hon. Prime Minister for allowing the hon. Minister to frame such a Budget. The country is proud that ours is the largest railway network in Asia having 63,140 kms. of railway line; 14,444 trains. Among them, 8,072 trains are passenger trains which carry lakhs of passengers from one end to another end. It is a matter of proud.

When we look at the other side of the coin, we should feel sorry also. In spite of having so many personnel at the disposal for manning the Railways, in spite of the efforts trying to acquire the latest technology, both indigenously and through imports, we are unable to avoid accidents from taking place. It is a sad thing that in the recent past the number of accidents because of derailments, because of unmanned level crossings, because of trains plunging into the rivers due to old bridges and old tracks have increased. We are claiming that we have framed a good budget, a common man-oriented Budget. But as hon. Member, Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh said, if we cannot save the lives of the people who travel in those trains thinking that they will reach their destinations safely, there is no meaning in saying that this is a common man-oriented or a good Budget.

In the recent past, they constituted a Committee under Shri H.R. Khanna. It had submitted a Report in two phases. Though some of the recommendations were considered and implemented, it seems the second phase of recommendations were not considered and implemented. I would humbly request the hon. Minister to go into the second phase of recommendations and if they serve the interest of the common man in terms of safety, those should be implemented forthwith.

Apart from that, we know that the tracks which were laid some hundreds of years back have just become very old. So is the case with the bridges. This needs a constant vigil by way of patrolling and by way of engineers going to the bridges and checking them frequently.

I would also request the hon. Railway Minister to pay attention to this important matter. In the recent past, a number of accidents have taken place at the railway crossings. So, immediately all the unmanned railway gates

have to be made manned railway gates. When I contacted our Zonal Manager, he said that there was resource crunch. This work is done on a cost sharing basis. He further said that the flow of vehicles, the density of traffic was not up to the required levels according to the guidelines. My point is that when the question of safety of the human beings comes, the Railways should not feel it as a prestige issue. Whether it is a manned or unmanned gate, whatever action is taken in regard to that, it should be convenient to the people of that particular area and it should not be inconvenient to the people of that particular area. So, my request to the hon. Minister is that he should see that all the unmanned gates are made manned gates.

Coming to the railway projects sanctioned to Andhra Pradesh as also to the South Central Railway Zone, I would like to say that there is a very marginal increase, which is as thin as a blade, when compared to the previous year's Budget. As far as the new lines are concerned, the allocation is only to the extent of Rs. 77.33 crore. As far as gauge conversion is concerned, it is to the extent of Rs. 78.69 crore. As far as doubling is concerned, it is to the extent of Rs. 54 crore. I feel—as one of our hon. Members has felt—that if the allocations are made like this and the total cost is compared to the previous year when making fresh allocations, to complete these projects, it might take forty or fifty years. As it has been felt, we may not be there by the time the railway projects are completed. So, I would request the hon. Minister to double all the allocations in the case of South Central Railway.

For instance, take the new line called Gadwal-Rachur. Its total cost is about Rs. 100 crore. This time, the allocation for this line is Rs. 5 crore. Previously, it was only one crore rupee. Then, for Munirabad-Mehboobnagar new line, the estimated cost is Rs. 420 crores whereas the allocation is only Rs. 10 crore. But here, instead of starting the work from any one of the end, either from Munirabad or Mehboobnagar, the work has been started in-between Yermarus and Krishna which is the centre of this line, which does not serve any purpose to Raichur Zone. So, steps have to be taken to start work at any one of the places, either at Munirabad or at Mehboobnagar. Likewise, for the Peddapally-Karimnagar-Nizamabad line, Rs. 15 crore has been allotted which is a marginal increase. For the Macherle-Nalgonda line, rupees one crore has been allocated. The projected cost of the project is Rs. 1.25 crore. The allocation in the previous year was only rupees one lakh. Now, it is rupees one crore. Likewise, when I go into the Hyderabad Multimodal Suburban Computer Transport System, it has

not been completed. More over, for the Kotapalli-Narsapur line Rs. 8 crore had been allotted last year and it is Rs. 5 crore this year; for the Kakinada-Kotapalli line, a sum of Rs. 21 crore has been allotted. Likewise, I feel that the allocations made by the Railways to the South Central Railway Zone is very inadequate. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to double these allocations.

Apart from these things, I have to make some more requests to the hon. Railway Minister for new lines. There is one line called the Macherle-Raichur line. Out of these, the Macherle-Nalgonda part and the Gadwal-Raichur line has been sanctioned. But though the main line, the Macherle-Gadwal line had been promised by the former Railway Minister, though our State Government and our Chief Minister had written letters to the Railway Minister a number of times, the project had not even been taken up for a survey. Recently, a survey was conducted on this line. This line basically goes through four districts of the South Central Zone—link Guntur, Nalgonda, Mehboobnagar and Raichur. ...*(Interruptions)*

Nalgonda and Mehboobnagar districts are perennially drought-prone districts, very backward districts. If the line goes through these four districts, it would generate employment for the youth. The cropping system will change and they will go in for commercial crops. As far as these districts are concerned, the major problem is that of migration of labour to the other States of the country and even to the other countries. So, this trend should be stopped.

Sir, I am happy that the hon. Minister has announced introduction of a number of new trains in the South Central Railway Zone. He has increased the frequency of some trains and extended some trains. But our long-standing demand for an Inter-City Express between Kacheguda and Kurnool remains unfulfilled. So, I request the hon. Minister to introduce this train immediately.

There are a lot of passengers travelling regularly between Kurnool and Hyderabad, including a number of students. The introduction of another Inter-City train between Kacheguda and Secundrabad is very essential to cater to the needs of the people of the area. So, I request the hon. Minister to introduce an Inter-City train between Kacheguda and Secundrabad forthwith.

Similarly, I request the Railway Minister to order a survey for a coastal railway line from Narsapuram to Repalle via Machlipatnam. I would also request that the Bangalore Passenger, which terminates at Vijayawada now, should be extended upto Machlipatnam. I would

request the hon. Minister to improve the facilities at Chilkapuri Railway Station.

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude now. I am going to call the next speaker.

DR. MANDA JAGANNATH: Sir, I am concluding.

Finally, I request that a new railway line should be constructed between Secundrabad and Karimnagar via Siddhipet and also RUB at Jadcherla.

*SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH BADNORE (Bhilwara): I support the Railway Budget presented to the Parliament for the year 2003-04.

I need to, first and foremost, congratulate the Hon'ble Railway Minister for giving a new direction to the Railway Budget of this year. For the first time, the focus is on the safety factor of the travellers. Travelling in the fast trains overnight and in the long haul Rajdhani—is it of utmost importance that we should feel secure and have faith in the Railways and that we will reach our destination in one piece, safe and sound.

Safety factor is of importance also because of the terrorist threat and the ISI becoming more and more active in the invasion of our nation. The Railway Minister has very rightly, in this Budget, tried to address this, by putting in many safety factor, including strengthening the bogies too so that even if there is an accident the damage is contained and fatality reduced.

The Railway Minister has also tried in this Budget to complete the unfinished new lines and projects, before taking up new lines and conversions and projects. It is important that the projects taken up are completed in time instead of taking up more and more projects which do not find the funds for completion in time. Time is the essence of such projects. Projects is completed in time start delivering and giving the services otherwise they are useless.

Hence let me mention the importance of the Ajmer-Chhittorgarh via Bhilwara broad-gauge conversion line. This line must be completed as soon as possible as it is going to give an alternative route from Rajasthan to Mumbai-Indore and South. It will connect Rajasthan to Madhya Pradesh-Mumbai and give impetus to the industry and tourism in Rajasthan. Marble and cement industry in Rajasthan will also profit from this Broad gauge conversion as it will have better access to the Central/Western and Southern India.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh Badnore]

I, therefore, request the Hon'ble Minister to hasten and give more funds to this project of broad gauge conversion from Ajmer to Chittorgarh and Neemch to Ratlam which is a missing link in this route to Mumbai.

In the end, I will only say, that this Railway Budget is a very balanced Budget and when many States are suffering from famine and drought conditions, you have thought about their plight and very rightly not increased the fare.

May I also commend you for plying water trains in the drought prone Rajasthan and also giving relief to senior citizens and the handicapped people and you thought for the armed forces.

[Translation]

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA (Chandrapur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I extend my thanks to you for having given me a chance to speak on the Railway Budget. Hon. Minister of Railways Shri Nitish Kumarji has presented the Railway Budget of 2003-2004 and announcements have been made especially with regard to construction of 50 new rail lines, but I would like to say that gross injustice has been done with Maharashtra. Be it goods freight or passenger fare, railways receive maximum income, maximum revenue from Maharashtra and only two new trains have been decided to be introduced there.

Sir, Indian Railways is world famous and is also the main source of commutation of the common people. I have been noticing for the last five-six years that the Railway Ministry is not getting budget provision in proportion to its plans to develop the railway infrastructure and we all are facing its adverse consequences.

Sir, on the one hand we are introducing schemes worth Rs. 65,000 crore for linking the metropolitan cities which attracts an expenditure of Rs. 5 to 6 crore per Km. stretch of road whereas the average expenditure per Km. of a railway track is Rs. one to one and a half crore as compared to the roads. Rail is more economic than road. It emits less pollution. Falls cause less accidents than roads. Where thousands of people are killed due to road accidents every year, only 675 people have been killed in rail accidents.

Sir, hon. Minister of Railways had expressed his gratitude to the hon. Prime Minister in his speech that he has promised through the National Railway Development Scheme that wholesome funds would be provided to the Department of Railways, but whereas on

the one hand hon. Minister is declaring new trains, no required effort are being made to upgrade the infrastructure, laying of new railway lines or construction of new bridges in place of old ones. All these things have been included in it but very scanty funds have been provided. This is the reason that railway accidents have increased in the past five-six years. And a three percent decline has occurred in the total passenger turnover. The reason is that common people now, do not feel safe to travel by rail and during their rail journey, they just apprehend whether they would reach their homes safe.

Sir, due to this very reason, I had made a request to the Government through a 'Calling Attention Motion' that all passengers travelling in the Railways should be issued and it would be acceptable even if nominal increase per passenger is made in the railway fares which may safeguard them if, god forbid they become a victim of railway accident, die or become handicapped, so this group insurance would be very helpful. The Group Insurance Scheme is being adopted by big factories and industries. Coal India is one of them. If a worker dies, his family Member get five to seven lakh rupees.

Sir, two hon. Ministers are sitting here, I would like to ask them to throw some light on the Group Insurance Scheme. One crore ten lakh passengers travel through trains every day. If the Government charge 50 paise or one rupee extra per ticket, it would give an income of Rs. one crore ten lakhs. It is pertinent to introduce Group Insurance Scheme for the railway passengers through the LIC or any other big company. Railway Budget was disappointing for Maharashtra. Sir, you also belong to Mumbai, Maharashtra. You have also been in the Maharashtra Assembly and have also been the Chief Minister.

Sir, I was in the Rajya Sabha in 1986, if we had converted the narrow gauge line from Chandrapur to Gondia and Gondia to Jablapur, then 180 Kms. of stretch would have been lessened from Chandrapur to Nagpur, and from Nagpur to Itarsi for going to Banaras to U.P. or Kolkata. Shri Shankar Dayal Sharmaji was in the Chair at that time, he intervened. He directed the Minister of Railways that if conversion into broad gauge results in national saving, fuel saving, then it should be given top priority. Hon. Minister declared that work from Chandrapur to Gondia has been completed. And that of Gondia to Jabalpur is going at a high pace, but in the absence of requisite funds, work is going on a slow pace for the last three years. Kindly get this work expedited. The work of broad gauge conversion and Bridge construction would reduce a distance of 180 Kms. by train, enabling national

savings. We did not expect this from the hon. Minister. He is a believer of socialistic ideology and akin to views of Lohia ji but showed a little narrow outlook in the field by trains etc. Hon. Minister sitting here has done injustice. I would like to urge that he may show some consideration towards the train he has started from Sikandarabad to Kagaznagar. Why is he breaking the railway journey just 70 Kms. before with regard to the train started from Sikandarabad to Kagaznagar and the Railway junction from Ballarshah. If the Minister works with such a narrow mindedness, the people would never forgive him. I would like to tell the hon. M.P. from Sikandarabad and hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways that he has started a train from Vijayawada to Mumbai, while our demand was that the train should be from Kajipet to Mumbai, instead it has been diverted from Sikandarabad despite the fact that train facility is already there from Sikandarabad to Mumbai. Infact the train should have been started from Sikandarabad, Kajipet to Ballarshah and from here to Mumbai, but that has also been diverted from Sikandarabad. This is wrong, kindly see to it. There was an assurance for maintenance as also a concept of modernisation of Chandrapur and Ballarshah Railway Stations. There are two railway stations in my Constituency. Being an industrial base, my district gives a revenue of Rs. 200 crore per annum to the Railways. And even in that due to lack of funds, modernisation work of Railway Stations has not been undertaken. The most backward district of Maharashtra, district Gadchirauli is included amongst the 25 most backward districts of Maharashtra. Survey has been conducted by the Government. A stretch of 49 Kms. of railway line from Desaignanj to Gadchirauli involved an expenditure of Rs. 67 crore. It is a naxalite affected area and Gadchirauli has also been given funds of the Rs. 15 crore given to each of 25 districts every year. Thus, the Gadchirauli railway line may kindly be given priority. I hope that the hon. Speaker Sir would also intervene in this matter of district Gadchirauli of Maharashtra. ...(*Interruptions*)

I would take another two minutes. Please extend the train operating from Sikandarabad to Kagaznagar to Ballarshah. As two additional railway platforms have been made in Ballarshah, so Bhagyashree Express operating from Sikandarabad to Kagaznagar may kindly be extended to Ballarshah, as it touches my district in Andhra Pradesh. There are 1.10 lakh Telugu speaking people living in Ballarshah and Chandrapur, they demand that why not the Bhagyashree Express be extended to Ballarshah when it comes upto Kagaznagar. I hope that the hon. Minister would definitely consider on this as the distance is only of 70 Kms.

Adilabad railway line in being converted into broadgauge. We have been demanding of extension of Adilabad line upto Garhchandor, as he is aware 3-4 big cement factories and coal industry is located there, thus 80 kms long rail line from Adilabad to Garhchindor be connected to it. Further, I would urge him to bear in mind our demand of starting a shuttle from Chandrapur to Nagpur. My last submission is that passenger at many time have been served biscuits containing sedatives in train running between Kazipet-Mumbai and their belongings have been pilfered. I urge him to pay attention toward it surely.

I am sure hon. Minister Shri Nitish Kumar ji will surely pay attention towards the points brought to his kind notice.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members I have got a list of total number of 18 Members who want to speak on this budget. Therefore, I would be able to give only 5 minutes each to every Member. I want to conclude the debate by 11 o'clock. I would request all of you to cooperate so that with the reply of the hon. Minister the debate can be concluded by 11 o' clock.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAJO SINGH (Begusarai): Mr. Speaker, Sir, does the announcement pertains to today's 11 o' clock.

MR. SPEAKER: I am talking of today itself.

[*English*]

*SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): Sir, in connection to the Railway Budget 2003-04 the following points should be considered by the Ministry:-

1. Recruitment of gangment should be made. That should be expeditious in all divisions-particularly in the division of Kharagpur under SER.
2. Unorganised workers working on railway line in construction and other works under the Railway contractors should be provided free passes for travelling to join the respective working places at the railway lines.
3. Uniformity of pay-scales between technical and non-technical employees in the Railway should be maintained. This point has to be examined and around eleven lakh technical employees

[Shri Prabodh Panda]

should be benefited with rationalise their pay-scales.

4. Rent and licence fees imposed upon the railway plot and shop holders have been enhanced abruptly. Minister was kind enough to set up a committee to review the matter. These may be enhanced moderately. Areas should be categorised according to the commercial viabilities. These may be enhanced moderately.
5. Cossy is a place at the bank of the River Kansabati in between Gokulpur and Midnapur Railway Station under KGP division of SER. Passengers, mostly EMU trains used to stop there for technical reason. But that facilitates, the local people to avail the trains. One small platform had been constructed there. But it is on one side. That place may be graded into designated Railway halt station.
6. Doubling from KGP to Midnapur via Giri Maidan under KGP Division of SER is urgently needed. I request to take it into consideration.
7. 2nd Bridge over the River Kansahasi in between Gokulpur and Midnapur Railway Station under KGP Division of SER is required.
8. Stoppage of any of the Delhi bound train at Contai Road Railway Station is required.
9. What about the wagons? How much order are going to be placed for new wagons to the PSUs and other units for the coming year.
10. Tender and oxen system should be reviewed so that a person having criminal records could not get involved.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAMSINH RATHWA (Chhota Udepur): Sir, I support the Rail Budget 2003-2004 presented by hon. Minister of Railways.

Hon. Minister has mentioned several issues in this Budget. As Indian Railway is going to complete its 150 splendid years, it has decided to take several measures for satisfaction of passengers. Several aspects, such as safety, security, punctuality, cleanliness, passenger amenities etc.

There is a likelihood of laying 1300 km long new rail line during current year. Hon. Minister has set a target

for laying new broad gauge line but old existing trains are being discontinued. Once upon a time Damoi was the biggest narrow gauge junction of Asia but now the Government are going to dismantle all narrow gauge trains, particularly which are passing through tribal areas of Gujarat. I do not think it is all right. I urge upon him to restore all narrow gauge trains in tribal areas.

Sir, I would like to tell that all the narrow gauge trains decided by him to be stopped are those which are passing through tribal areas. What is the reason behind it? I would like to know it.

Indian railway runs trains throughout India and several routes are in loss, still those have not been withdrawn. He has decided to stop only trains running through tribal areas, which is not good. Sir, my submission is that trains on all such narrow gauge lines should be started again.

A train which is running for the last several years between Pratapnagar-Chhota Udepur under Vadodra division, in my Parliamentary constituency has been stopped. A bridge on this route had collapsed because of flood caused by heavy downpour. Though, this bridge has been repaired after spending crores of rupees yet the train has not yet started. Since the train was not to be started again what was the need for repairing the bridge? Narrow gauge train still runs between Pratapnagar-Badaili. Train running on remaining 35 km long route should be started again immediately. Pratapnagar-Dammoi-Badaili meter gauge train be extended upto Chhota Udepur. Goods train, in addition to passenger train should be also be introduced so that tribals and other backward passengers may get some facility. This year, he has given some concessions and did not raise the fares and freight. Therefore, my submission is that Chhota Udepur-Badaili-Pratapnagar meter gauge train should be immediately started even if this route is loss making one. Loss in meter gauge will be less. Sir, it is our responsibility to help backward classes.

As per rules laid down by Hon. Supreme Court and provisions made by the Ministry of Railways, Some posts reserved for SCs, STs and OBCs are vacant in the Ministry which should be immediately filled up. What is the reason behind gradual decline in the number of Scheduled Tribe employees? Hon. Minister should clarify this position in his speech. As per Annual Report for the year 2001-2002 number of such employees is as follows:-

Group A. 618 employees upto 31.3.2001 and 500 employees up to 31.3.2002.

- B. 362 employees upto 31.3.2001 and 352 employees up to 31.3.2002.
- C. 54955 employees upto 31.3.2001 and 54283 employees upto 31.3.2002.
- D. 41860 employees up to 31.3.2001 and 41502 employees upto 31.3.2002.
- E. 2787 employees upto 31.3.2001 and 2522 employees upto 31.3.2002.

The number of employees upto 31.3.2001 was 97,795 which has come down to 96,637 on 31.3.2002.

Hon. Minister of Railway may have presented a very good budget but before preparing the Budget attention should be paid to lowest category and the backward as well. Though, he may have taken care of these classes, he has paid more attention to urban passengers and not to the poors and backward.

He has not started even a single train for rural labourers. Not only that, it is very sad that he has withdrawn some of the rail facilities available for such people.

Though he may have made people of our country happy at large, people of my constituency are unhappy with him. Therefore my submission is that at least Chhota Udepur-Pratapnagar meter gauge train should be started urgently.

[English]

DR. N. VENKATASWAMY (Tirupati): Mr. Speaker Sir, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak on this Railway Budget.

Sir, I rise to commend the Railway Budget presented to Parliament for the year 2003-04. This is a popular Budget applauded by all sections of the people, serving every sector starting from passengers to senior citizens and traders. I am also thankful to the hon. Minister for having shown some consideration to Andhra Pradesh in giving gauge conversions and new lines.

But I am sorry to inform you that Rayalseema has not been given sufficient consideration for the development of that area. Sir, you know, Rayalseema is a very backward area where valuable minerals are available and all ingredients for the development of industries are essential. You also know that for any development, energy and transportation are essential. For that we have proposed Tirupati to Katpadi gauge conversion. It was started in 1992 and still it is pending.

Sir, I represent Tirupati. Many of you must have visited Tirupati to offer your prayers to Lord Venkateswara. This is the town which needs everybody's support. Tirupati-Katpadi gauge conversion work was started 10 years back. Now, it has not yet been completed. The hon. Minister has promised that they would be completing it by the end of this month. Now, there is one difficulty. It is pending with the Railway Board. It seems that some infringement of gradient is essential for running the train. The track was ready by the month of September. The train is not on the rails because of the board not giving condonation for infringement of gradient. I request the Railway Board to immediately give condonation for infringement of gradient. If this is done, the train will move immediately. That is one thing.

Then, gauge conversion of Pakala to Dharmavaram is also very important. This is pending for a long time. The allotment that is given now is very meager. I request the hon. Railway Minister and the Railway Ministry to see that adequate fund is given for gauge conversion of Pakala to Dharmavaram.

Then, doubling of Gudur-Renigunta and doubling of Guntakkal-Renigunta are pending for a long time. I request the hon. Minister to see that two doubling things are done immediately.

For the last three years, I have been requesting the Minister to give a new line from Anantpur to Yerraguntla, which goes across Rayalseema district. It will be helpful to the poor people of Rayalseema. I request the hon. Minister to give this new line immediately.

Another thing is that for the line, Nadukudi to Venkatagiri, survey was done long back. It seems that it is kept pending. This is very important because it goes across the very backward areas of Nalgonda, Nellore and Chittur. I request that this new line, Nadukudi to Venkatagiri, may be taken up immediately.

Garudadri Express, from Chennai to Tirupati, was a passenger train first. it was made as an express train. Now, it is not accessible to the poor people. I request the hon. Minister—he has already promised—to see that Garudadri Express be made again as a passenger train.

[Translation]

*SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur): Sir, as far as Rail Budget is concerned, my submission is that a Railway Recruitment Board at new zone Bilaspur should

[Shri Punnu Lal Mohale]

be set up. A new train between Bilaspur Lucknow should be introduced. Chirmiri-Bilaspur local train should be extended upto Raipur Durg. After conducting survey for laying new rail line from Bilaspur-Mandha-Jabalpur, Chindwara/Jabalpur conversion should be connected.

Funds for construction of Bilaspur-Tipura over bridge should be hiked to Rs. 10 crore in the budget. Amarkantak Express should be provided stoppage at Kheigahana station and Sarnath Express at Chakarbhata station.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you(*Interruptions*).

MR. SPEAKER: You have asked for two minutes time but I would give you five minutes.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. Just now members of Ruling Party were congratulating hon. Minister of Railways for presenting the Budget. I could understand this one but it was beyond my understanding as to why they were congratulating Hon. Prime Minister. If blessings of hon. Prime Minister had bestowed upon the Ministry of Railway, Railway Ministry would have been allotted at least half of Rs. 56 thousand crore, allocated for National Highways. Then we would have been able to introduce Fast trains. There is a need for us to match with super fast trains being introduced in the world. It needs funds and I can say that hon. Finance Minister and hon. Prime Minister have not extended cooperation in this regard. I would like to congratulate hon. Minister of Railways for having done lots of things within limited resources.

Hon. Minister has mentioned of private participation in cleanliness. I would humbly request him to take cleanliness very seriously. He is Minister of Railways, if he conducts random checking he himself will come to know the reality. I would like to cite an example of Amritsar-Katihar train. It has one second class bogie. Sometimes I have to catch that train from Kanpur to reach Gorakhpur. The toilet in that bogie remains in more pitiable condition than that of sleeper class.

I want to say that it is good that cleanliness has been emphasised in this year's Budget. But it needs monitoring. If proper monitoring is done, people would definitely get better facilities.

Second thing I would like to point out regarding slow progress of gauge conversion work started last year on Gorakhpur-Anandnagar-Notanva and Gorakhpur-Anandnagar Gonda loop line. I would urge him to speed up the pace of work. Dr. Raghunvash Babu and other

colleagues have mentioned about coolies. I want to tell that he has been representing the weaker sections right from his entry into politics. Coolie is the weakest section of society and he heads the life of a nomad. Coolies stay in so congested way that 100 to 150 coolies get accommodated in a single room. Consequently, they contact all sorts of infectious diseases. I have demanded that waiting rooms for coolies should be provided at station where the number of coolies is more than 100, such as Delhi, New Delhi, Mumbai and several other cities. Delhi All India Railway Coolies Organisation has written a letter to me in this regard. The fare for coolies was fixed in 1998. It was fixed at Rs. 9 for 40 kgs weight and if any coolie charges 4-5 rupee more he is punished, but we do not punish the person who overloads them. Is it not inhuman act that we overload a person beyond his carrying capacity? Such people should be punished severely. A policy for transfer of Badge of a coolie should be framed. If after putting 10-15 years of service any coolie wants to transfer his badge to any of his family member or relative, it should be allowed. They should be provided facility of gratuity after completion of 10 years of service and they should be provided pension on attaining age of 60 years. My further submission is that coolies should be provided rail pass facility at least for his wife so that they can easily travel to their homes and fro.

Ten lakh technicians working in Railways are given step motherly treatment. I do not know whether these things have been brought to your notice or not. Ten lakh technicians in Railways help running of trains smoothly. Minimum qualification required for a technician is High school plus 2 years ITI diploma. But even today separate cadre exists for Technician and Supervisor for grade three employees whereas there is no cadre under the Ministry of Railways wherein separate cadre for technician and supervisor exists for group three employees. Today, there is an urgent need of crating a common cadre for group three technicians employed in Railways. These technicians working in Railway Ministry do not get any kind of risk allowance or technical allowance. Not only this, these employees are not even provided uniform while working in remote or on open lines. They are not paid washing allowance also. therefore, these anomalies should be removed.

In the end, I would like to bring one thing concerning my constituency to his notice. The Government have started Saptkranti train which is very good train for this area. After starting from Gorakhpur it stops at Delhi only. But, before Gorakhpur, when it leads towards Bihar from Uttar Pradesh it stops at a distance of 40-45 to 60 Km. I would urge him to provide stoppage of Saptkranti at

Sisawa, which is a very important railway station and falls between Bihar and Gorakhpur where Passengers from Nepal arrive and even passengers from Bihar too catch trains from here. I would like to point out one more thing. Venders in Vaishali Express, which runs from Gorakhpur to Barauni are appointed on commission basis and some of them have even been working for the last 30-35 years. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Now conclude.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Sir, it involves poors and I would conclude within two minutes. These venders are working on commission basis. If one calculates their daily earning, in the days of so high prices, they are not able to earn Rs. 1000-1200. Therefore, my submission is that they should be absorbed as Group IV employees. In some of the trains it has already been done. But so far venders in Vaishali Express have not been absorbed. In the past he had convened a formal meeting of railway, wherein I was informed that the issue of their absorption is under process. But so far it has not been done. I would like him to do it urgently.

A vender named Sahu from his State Bihar, died in absence of treatment during winter in Gorakhpur. His dependents have not been paid compensation so far. Please ensure that his poor family gets compensation from Railways.

Congratulation to him for having given new direction to Railways. I think he would pay attention to these issues and solve the problems.

[English]

SHRI V. VETRISELVAN (Krishnagiri): Thank you, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to speak on this subject.

This Railway Budget has been described as a passenger-friendly budget and so I thank the hon. Minister on behalf of my party, the DMK, on behalf of my leader, Kalaignar Karunanidhi, and also on my behalf. He has done an excellent work in presenting this Budget.

The hon. Minister has announced many concessions in this Budget for old citizens and for patients. He has declared this year as the 'customer satisfaction year'. This Budget is a social budget because there is no increase in passenger fares and freight charges.

As far as new trains introduced by the hon. Minister are concerned, there are about 50 new express trains. Out to them, only five trains are for Tamil Nadu. They

run between Chennai Egmore and Tiruchirappalli; Salem and Bangalore; Chennai and Dehra Dun; Vasco and Chennai; and Chennai and Bangalore. Tamil Nadu is very famous. It has one of the four metropolitan cities but in regard to introducing new trains for Tamil Nadu only five trains have been introduced. Even now, we have enough time and so my request to the hon. Minister is to reconsider our request to introduce more trains to Tamil Nadu especially for southern districts of Tamil Nadu from Bangalore to Madurai *via* Dharmapuri.

Our hon. Minister, in his speech, has also announced an increase in the frequency of some popular trains. In his speech, he has mentioned about thirteen trains in this regard but there is no train from Tamil Nadu for which the frequency has been increased. This is very unfortunate because in respect of any announcement, the benefit given to Tamil Nadu is very minimal. Therefore, I again request the hon. Minister to kindly reconsider and introduce new trains for Tamil Nadu. This is my humble submission.

As far as the allocation of funds to the State of Tamil Nadu is concerned, it is very minimal. What we thought that since we have an hon. Minister of State of Railways from Tamil Nadu, he would fight with his senior Minister and also he would get more money to the Tamil Nadu. ...*(Interruptions)* However, he is not getting the amount. ...*(Interruptions)* It is very unfortunate for all of us who belong to Tamil Nadu. ...*(Interruptions)* Of course, I am not blaming anything to him. I blame him only as to why he did not fight with his senior Minister to get more money for Tamil Nadu. That is all. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: It is not 'fight' it is 'try'.

SHRI V. VETRISELVAN: As far as allocation of fund is concerned, the hon. Minister has announced ten new gauge conversion schemes for Tamil Nadu. The first one is famous Madurai-Rameswaram. The conversion of that line is estimated at Rs. 243 crore. But the allocation made in this year's Budget is only Rs. 10 crore. It is a very meagre amount. For Vizhupuram-Katpadi line, they have made an allocation of only Rs. 1 crore, whereas the estimated amount is Rs. 175 crore. for Trichy-Manamadurai line, they have allocated Rs. 5 crore, whereas the estimated amount is Rs. 187 crore. For Chennai Beach-Trichy line, they have allocated Rs. 1 crore, whereas the estimated amount is Rs. 730 crore. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Vetriselvan, please come to the point.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI V. VETRISILVAN: Sir, I have just started. We are 'junior Members'. So, please give some more time to the 'junior Members'. ...*(Interruptions)* Towards Thanjavur-Vizhupuram project, Rs. 15 crore have been allocated as against the estimated amount of Rs. 231 crore. Cuddalore to Salem via Vriddhachalam has been allocated only Rs. 10 crore as against Rs. 99.34 crore. These are all very meagre amount. So, I request the hon. Minister of State to have a dialogue with his senior Minister and he should demand more money. ...*(Interruptions)* This is a very serious and important issue.

Sir, recently the South-Western Railway has been inaugurated by our hon. Prime Minister. The South-Western Railway consists of three Divisions. One is Bangalore, another is Mysore and third one is Hubli. The sections from Bangalore to Omalur and Patchur to Jolarpettai are at present with Bangalore Division of Southern Railway and with the formation of South Western Railway; these sections will go to South Western Railway. ...*(Interruptions)* This is a very important issue. Some of the portions went to Hubli from Tamil Nadu, especially from my constituency. Therefore, there is already some animosity against the Tamil people as far as Karnataka State is concerned. There are many reasons and, I think, you also know them. Therefore, I would request that the Omalur-Hosur and Jolarpettai-Patchur section should be retained with the Southern Railway. As a temporary measure it can be merged with the Palakkad Division and in due course it should be formed a part of Salem Division for which all the MPs of Tamil Nadu have demanded in one voice.

18.00 hrs.

Sir, one more a very important issue. We are demanding for the past five decades for a new line between Jolarpet to Hosur via Krishnagiri. It is pending for a long time. Before Independence, there was a railway line upto Krishnagiri, but it had been abandoned. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar, through you towards this aspect and request him to sympathetically consider my request. The people of my area are dreaming for this. They are waiting for this year to see the announcement about this new line. Unfortunately, I did not find to include this scheme in this Budget. I would like to request the hon. Minister of Railways to include this new line in current year Budget. Previously the Railways had ordered for a survey which was conducted towards the end of December, 2000 and a false study report was presented before the Railway Board stating that creation of a railway line in this area is found to be of no physical profit. On the basis of the

said report, the Railways have not taken any action towards the creation of the railway line between Jolarpet and Hosur.

Probably, the hon. Speaker knows about Hosur. Sir, Hosur is an industrial town. There are more than 1,000 small-scale industries and more than 10 big industries. Bit industries like Ashok Leyland and Tata and other companies are there where lakhs of workers are working.

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude now.

I have to make two announcements. The first announcement is that arrangement of a stenographer is made at the office of the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs. So, those hon. Members who want to dictate their speeches can go to the office of the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, dictate the speeches and can lay their speeches on the Table of the House.

Secondly, the time of the House of being extended, with the consent of the House, till the debate is over and the hon. Minister's reply is over. Till that time the House will continue.

SHRI V. VETRISILVAN: Sir, finally, I request once again. By creation of this new line, the people of Krishnagiri can reach towards the Northern and Southern parts of the country. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister. ...*(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): Sir, I submit that the reply can be tomorrow, immediately after the Question Hour. The debate will be over today.

MR. SPEAKER: As suggested by the hon. Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, the hon. Minister of Railways will reply tomorrow, immediately after the Question Hour. I hope the House agrees. The debate will be over today.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Thank you, Sir. The facility of Stenographer for the Members who want to get their speech typed, has been provided in room No-14. Hon. Members can lay their speech on the Table, it will take some time also.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Two hon. Members—Shri Shyam Bihari Mishra and Shri Radha Mohan Singh—have laid their speeches on the Table of the House. I admit them.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Sir, please announce for the arrangement of meals also.

MR. SPEAKER: I am announcing for the arrangement of meal but not the menu.

[English]

SHRI V. VETRISELVAN: Therefore, I request the Government to reconsider the demand of the people of Krishnagiri. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri E. Ahamed, you can go ahead with your speech. You can start your speech now.

SHRI V. VETRISELVAN: Sir, just one minute please.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Vetriselvan, I have given you more than enough opportunity. Please sit down. Shri Ahamed, you can start your speech.

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI V. VETRISELVAN: Sir, I, therefore, request the hon. Minister to reconsider the demand of the people of Krishnagiri area and to direct the Department of Railways to conduct a feasibility of new survey for creation of this new railway line between Jolarpet and Hosur.

[Translation]

*SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH (Motihari): All these things which have been neglected during the last 50 years have been given due attention to in this year's Railway Budget. Hence, first of all I would on behalf of my party and the countryman and also on my own behalf like to thank the hon. Prime Minister and hon. Minister of Railways. This budget is really dedicated to providing facilities for and safety of rail passengers. A look at railway budget make it clear that the Railways has been celebrating this year as the passenger satisfaction year.

Railways are the man made of transport in the country and the total length of the track is approximately 1 lakh kilometres. India has the second largest transport system in the world after America. Railways has approximately 16 crore employees and earns a revenue of more than 30 thousand crore rupees. Railways also account for approximately one and a half crore tonnes of freight carriage and approximately 1 crore 20 lakh passengers travel everyday through it. The railways spend Rs. 16 crore on wages of its employees.

Sir, the competition in transport sector is likely to increase in future. If we do not meet the aspirations of people and provide them facilities, they will lose their attraction for Railways. Keeping it in view the passengers fares and freight charges both have been rationalised. Consequently, the fares have decreased at several places and its benefit covered be accrued in the next financial year.

Today, the opposition are criticising this budget just for the sake of criticism. Several hon. Members are criticising this budget by calling it as electoral budget. This reaction itself proves that it is welfare oriented budget and I would like to say that opposition should not hesitate to accept that hon. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee is the first Prime Minister in the country to provide 12 thousand crore for development of railway infrastructure from the general pool. This is going to prove as a golden chapter in history of Indian Railways. I am of the opinion that the entire House and the country need to express its gratitude for it.

The most important feature of this budget is that proposals for doubling of rail lines to ensure timely running of trains and installing latest equipment on railway platforms have been made under this budget. Several such backward areas would be connected to trains which have been neglected so far. An additional allocation of Rs. 32 thousand crore has been made for safety and development through which railway facilities could be improved.

Many provisions for providing passenger amenities have been made in this year's budget besides modifying the old provisions. The provisions of providing duplicate ticket in case of loss of the original reservation ticket has been made. The concession in railway fare up to 72 per cent have been provided to the persons suffering from the serious diseases like cancer etc. Similarly, the concession of 30 per cent in railway fare in Shatabdi and Rajdhani trains has been given for the renowned journalists. There is a provision for providing free food to children up to age of 5 years. The concessions to the senior citizens will start from 60 years onwards. The penalty on the passenger travelling in reserved compartments on waiting ticket has been decreased. The budget has been prepared keeping the future of the people in view. This can be gauged from the fact that a target of laying nine new railway lines of 225 kms. length has been fixed. 50 new trains are being introduced this year and 24 are being extended. At no point of time before development and welfare could be adopted in such a balanced manner.

While introducing the railway budget in 1998 during the previous tenure the hon. Minister had taken a

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Radha Mohan Singh]

welcome initiative by revising the freight charge. It is a matter of happiness that the categories of freight charges have been reduced to 32 from 59 and the difference between the average maximum and average minimum freight rates has been reduced from 8.00 to 2.8. Heavy concession had been offered in this year's budget by making the freight charges more consumer oriented. The rate of freight has been reduced in many categories. The freight rates on petrol and other products have been reduced by 10.7 per cent. Relief has also been provided to the siding owners by making provisions of surcharge at wagon load freight and by providing freight facilities for many articles. These measures would result in increase in revenue which is worthy of welcome.

A target of earning a revenue of Rs. 26118 through freight carriage and Rs. 13415 crore through passenger fare during the next financial year has been fixed in this budget. The declaration of selling up new terminals at Anand Vihar in Delhi and in Kolkata is a welcome step. Sir, a target of spending amount of Rs. 12918 crore has been fixed for the next financial year which include the proposed expenditure of Rs. 2311 crore through Special Railway Safety Fund.

Sir, the selling up of a task force regarding sanitation at railway stations and trains is a long awaited step. The trains and railway stations are very filthy which causes ill effects on passengers. The decision to recruit 3500 new constables in RPF to take care of railway's property and the safety of railway passengers is also a very important step.

Sir, the reactions of the corporate world are the testimony of the welfare measure of this budget. Several organisations like FICCI, CII and FIO etc. have showered praise on the hon. Railway Minister for rationalising the freight rates and passengers fare and for providing other reliefs.

Sir, I hail from Bihar, the steps taken by the Railway and especially the hon. Minister of Railways in the NDA Government for the development of Bihar comprise the golden chapter in its history. The steps like making Hazipur as new railway zone, the introduction of several trains like Sampoorna Kranti, Sapta Kranti, Bandra Express, Several inter-city express connecting various cities, the construction of railway bridge in Patna and Monghyr (cost Rs. 900 crore), at Ganga river, (Cost Rs. 925 crore) the railway bridge at Koshi with cost of Rs. 1000 crore and the running of several trains linking capital Patna to other capitals etc. created a network of projects in Bihar to make it roll on the path of development.

Sir, I support the Champaran area of North Bihar which is an extremely backward region and it is the land of Gandhi, Gautam, Balmiki and Chanakya. The laying of railway line at Hazipur Sugoli via Asreja is a long pending demand. The people of Champaran are grateful to the hon. Minister for the effort made by him in this regard. We also express our gratitude to the hon. Minister of Finance and to the Planning Commission also for making Motihari a model railway station and extension of Chakiya. The NDA Government have done a great favour to my constituency by giving additional funds. The railway journey has been a viable option for the people of my constituency by introduction of dozens of new trains for the first time since Independence.

Sir, due to absence of an overbridge, lots of problems are being faced in the densely populated area which has its headquarter at Motihari. The same is the condition of Chakiya. I request that over bridge be constructed at both these places. Computer facilities should be provided at Chakiya railway station immediately in view of the increasing number of passengers at Chakiya railway station. Sir, Chakiya is the main railway station of Champaran. The passengers of Sahebganj in Muzaffarpur and district Sivhar also undertake railway journey from this station. This is also the central place for the Sikrahana division and Chakiya division of Champaran and also a connecting point of NH-104 and NH-108. I request that the Saptakranti running between Muzaffarpur and Delhi be provided a halt at Chakiya. Sir, I have a special request for a place situated on Indo-Nepal border. Hon. Member hails from Bihar. He does not need to waste much energy to understand the topography and history of that region. Sitamarhi, Sivhar and Motihari, situated at Indo-Nepal border are the district headquarters and these places are yet to be connected to railways. The people of all three districts headquarter have to face great difficulty in transport due to the presence of hilly rivers including Sikaharna, Lalbakeya and Bagmati and hon. Minister is also aware of these difficulties. This place is the Karmbhoomi (land of action) of Mahatma Gandhi and birth place of mother Sita. The Government should certainly make a declaration to add the dignity and fame of the region.

Lastly, I request that the Government must construct Sitamarhi, Sivhar, Motihari railway line and I conclude with the hope that the same would be done.

*SHRI SHYAM BIHARI MISHRA (Bilhour): Sir, I heartily welcome the Railway Budget for the year 2003-2004 introduced by hon. Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumar under the able guidance of hon. Prime Minister

*Speech was laid on the Table.

Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. This is the first budget in which the passenger fares have not been increased and the resolution to celebrate the 150th year of Railways as passenger amenities year is indeed appreciable. Customer is like god and his satisfaction is our job paramount. This year has been declared as Railway users satisfaction year. The declaration of providing employment to 20 thousand persons by Railway Recruitment Board is to do away unemployment, and the declaration to develop anti-collusion device has been made. Some of the declarations like providing concession in fare to the senior citizens and reducing the reckoning age from 65 to 60 years, expanding existing facility of concession in fare up to 75 per cent in the first and second class to the patients suffering from dreaded disease like Thalessemia and heart diseases are really very important. Now this facility has also been extended to mail express trains and three tier, air conditioned chair-care with some concession of 75 per cent and air-conditioned second class with the concession of 50 per cent and it would provide a lot of relief to common man. The step to provide concession in fare to the renowned journalists is also an appreciable step. The proposals of gauge conversion of 791 km. long rail line, laying of 225 km long new railway lines, doubling of 340 kms long line and electrification of 375 km. long lines will provide impetus to work of railway department. Hon. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee has declared 21st century as India's century and it is being put into practice also. It is an appreciable step. I congratulate hon. Minister of Railways for it. I also thank him for recruiting 3500 new constables in RPF for ensuring the safety of Railway passengers. The declaration of the hon. Prime Minister on his Independence day speech to set up a task force for maintaining cleanliness and looking after sanitation work at Railway stations and trains etc. is also a welcome step. The proposal to refund the reservation amount even after three hours after train departure to the passengers unable to undertake journey is also an appreciable step. The provision of providing duplicate ticket facilities in lieu of 10 per cent additional payment is also a good step to make journey convenient. I thank the hon. Railway Minister for it. Besides, I would also like to make some requests for making rail journey more comfortable.

Kanpur is the major industrial and trading centre of India. The godowns of Kanpur are famous in entire North India. The goodsshed here are lying empty due to non-availability of wagons. This is adversely affecting the trade and industries of North India. There is a need to increase the number of goods carrying wagons and also to increase the frequency of the existing wagons. Hence, I urge upon the Government to take special steps to

provide more wagon rakes and extra-wagons in Kanpur. The hon. Minister should also issue orders to ensure this.

Kanpur Central is a very old Railway station. The station remain over crowded due to 45 lakh population of Kanpur. It is difficult to reach the station due to the road leading to it being jammed all the time. There is a need to provide halt of some Delhi bound express and mail trains at Govind Nagar and Panki which may ease congestion at both the railway stations and the road.

EMU trains are running between Lucknow and Kanpur. If these trains are started from Panki half an hour before the time fixed at the Central Station, it would result in lot of convenience to the passengers and they may also get the benefit of the 'Amenity Year'. This will also not cost any additional burden to Railways.

Many sick persons and their accomplices and businessmen travel between Kanpur and Mumbai. All the trains going to south have to pass through the stretch of single line devoid of any electrification facility between Kanpur and Jhansi which makes the journey of 225 km. very cumbersome. Passenger do not get the facility. I had raised this point in previous year's budget also.

I request the Government to undertake the doubling of rail line between Jhansi and Kanpur in time phase, if it is not possible in single phase, i.e. this year's budget and similarly to undertake the electrification of this line.

Though there is railway line between Kanpur and Balamau but it is a very old and mediocre track on which mail or express trains cannot run due to which there is no rail connection between Kanpur, Shahjahanpur, Bareilly, Rampur, Hardoi etc. If this track is improved to Mail and Express standard then Kanpur can be connected with all cities of Uttaranchal. Therefore, I draw your attention towards it.

There is a need to start Intercity trains between Kanpur-Satana, Kanpur-Jhansi, Kanpur-Tundla and Kanpur-Allahabad as thousands of commuters travel from these cities to and fro daily for official work, business and industrial purposes. Hence, I urge you to pay attention towards this also.

In view of increasing population of Kanpur city there is an urgent need to construct an over bridge over the railway line crossing city. There is a need for an over bridge on GT Road on Howrah-Delhi main line and COD crossing as traffic remains jammed at this place for hours causing great inconvenience to passengers. There is a

[Shri Shyam Bihari Mishra]
need for overbridge on Jariv Chowki at Coca cola and Gurudev Place railway crossing on Kanpur-Farrukhabad meter gauge line.

Kanpur Dehat is a newly created district-Sara is its main railway station. About 1000 passengers from this station travel to and fro Kanpur daily. There is no morning train which can facilitate passengers so that they can reach court etc. between 9 and 10 in the morning as the other available local train normally remains late by hours. Itawah-Kanpur local trains also remain late by hours. Passengers from this area have been demanding introduction of morning train for the last 10 years. People have even courted arrest and cases are still pending. My submission is that this facility may be provided to these people during this 'Suvidha year'. Moori Express may be provided 2 minutes stoppage at Sara Station which will facilitate the passengers a lot and the slogan, 'Passengers Amenity Year' will also prove to be meaningful.

Panki is a major railway station under Kanpur Metro Steel Yard, yard of Indian Oil, Yard of Indian Oil Depots, Pankiya Industrial Estate and Panki Power House is located here. Therefore, Panki Railway Station should be developed and passenger amenities be provided along with the facility of reservation.

While congratulating hon. Minister again for presenting Rail Budget I expect him to accord priority to my suggestion in this Budget.

[English]

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am very much grateful to you for having called me to speak on the Railway Budget. The hon. Minister of Railways is a good friend of mine. I am not able to criticise him because many a time, especially when there was a big tragedy in my place, he had rushed there and had done everything. But I am constrained to bring some facts to the attention of the House as well as the hon. Minister. I am also constrained to point out some of the lapses on the part of the Railways.

Today the Railways are under tremendous pressure so far as its rolling stock is concerned. You look at the 1950-51 figures of the freight and passenger movement vis-a-vis the rolling stock position and compare it with the figures of 2001-2002.

We find that on the one hand both the freight and the traffic movement has increased seven fold, but on the other hand, there is hardly any appreciable increase

in the rolling stock. The result is that the rolling stock, including the tracks, is under tremendous pressure.

18.05 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

One of the objectives of the Tenth Plan, so far as Railways is concerned, is to augment capacity. This is the second Budget so far as the Tenth Plan is concerned, but I am sorry to observe that the Railways have done nothing to augment capacity. This is revealed by the provisions made under the various Plan heads. In majority of the Plan heads, you will see that there is a decline in the provisions made for new lines, gauge conversion and track renewal. Wherever there is a small increase in the allocation made, that also is very normal taking into account four to five per cent rate of inflation. The Minister himself has mentioned this. Therefore, these are the matters the hon. Railway Minister has to look into.

I would like to say one thing more about this Budget. Eighty per cent of the passengers travel by Second Class and Sleeper Class. What has the Minister offered to them? What are they getting? They are getting crowded coaches, unauthorised passengers, dirty toilets, etc. Those who travel by Shatabdi Express and Rajdhani Express are taken care of. Is it to be done by a socialist Minister like my friend Shri Nitish Kumar? The majority of passengers are being ignored.

I would like to mention another point about accidents. Most of the accidents are occurring due to derailments and the major cause is human failure. This requires strengthening of tracks and better training of staff. Unfortunately, it is not being done. Accountability should be fixed at every level. I would also like to mention to the Minister—and I hope that Minister's attention will be on this point of accidents—that there are safety parameters already prepared by the Railways. If they can develop it as a module, whenever there occurs an accident, that module will see how the accident took place and what are the causes. Then, the Inquiry Commission cannot tamper with facts or make its own observations. In spite of this fact, what has happened? This is a matter to be looked into.

Coming to my State, Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to say that Kerala has been generally neglected and Malabar has been ignored fully. When Railways started 150 years ago in southern India, it was Malabar which took care of the Railways. They do not have even one double line from Shornur to Mangalore. The original provision required for it was Rs. 150 crore whereas this

Budget provides only Rs. 52 crore. We have been pressurising the Government for some many years, but it has not been done.

Again, in our area, all the trains are over-crowded. I would say that very many passengers are from that area, but they do not have the necessary compartments, and unreserved compartments are not there in the trains plying between Chennai and Mangalore or Trivandrum and Mangalore or Calicut and Mangalore. Due to this, the passengers have to stand for hours to reach their destinations.

The Railways have sanctioned seven new zones. Why have they not formed a zone in Kerala? After you take away the North-Eastern States, Kerala is the only State which has been ignored, which is without any zone. Whatever is the amount allotted to the various zones—the Southern Zone is doing everything to Madurai, Trichy and Coimbatore—I have no objection. What about Kerala? What have they given to trivandrum Division? What have they given to Palakkad Division? They have given nothing. We do not have bridges. We do not have double lines. There is no gauge conversion. No electrification of lines has been provided there. There are no good trains given to that area and no new lines have been proposed for that area.

Nothing has been done, and the Malabar region has been completely ignored and neglected. I am sorry to say that the Government cannot boast of presenting a good Budget when this area has been neglected and ignored. I hope, the Minister will take care of these things.

With these few words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Sarvashree Parsuram Majhi, Lakshman Seth, Paban Singh Ghatowar and Maheshwar Singh are permitted to lay their speeches on the Table of the House.

[English]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Mavelikara): This is not a healthy practice, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is being done with the consent of the House.

[English]

*SHRI PARSURAM MAJHI (Nawarangpur): Sir, at the outset, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to take part in the discussion on the Railway Budget 2003-04. Sir, this year Railway Budget has taken care of every section of the people and that is why it has received very good response from everybody. I thank our Honourable Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayeeji for giving a freehand to our Honourable Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumarji for presenting such commendable Budget. I support the Railway Budget wholeheartedly and would like to express my views on the Budget.

When the proposal for construction of Railway lines were mooted in India it was kept in view to connect the Industrial areas and the major cities by Rail. The Railway lines were subsequently extended to several other States. But there are several other areas which are not connected by Rail. Even the Road communication has not been provided to those areas. The people living in those inaccessible areas have not tested the fruit of civilization. They do not have even a fareweather road to their villages. Therefore the plan formulated by the Govt. are not implemented successfully due to lack of infrastructural facilities. Due to lack of development the people in those areas are passing their days with dire poverty and the problems like unemployment among youth is leading them towards violence. More and more of these unemployed youths are joining in naxalite activities. These kind of activities are acting as the stumbling block on the path of progress of those areas.

Sir, the Govt. is spending crores of rupees for the development of those areas. Those areas are abounds with valuable forest and mineral resources. But it is regrettable that these resources are not been fully exploited in the absence of National Highway and Railways. I appreciate the well intention of the Govt. to plan for the development of those areas. A number of centrally sponsored schemes have been launched for this purpose. Even the big industrial houses are very keen to set up industries in those areas. But it has not become possible due to lack of infrastructural facilities like road and railways.

Sir, I represent a Scheduled area i.e., Nawarangpur Parliamentary Constituency in Orissa. It is a part of KBK districts in that State. A railway line was laid from Vishakhapatnam to Kirandol in Chhatisgarh with a view to transport Iron ore from Bailadhila mines for exporting

[Shri Parsuram Majhi]

to Japan. An agreement was made between the Govt. of India and Japan for the purpose. So, a rail line was laid which touches some areas of my Parliamentary Constituency. Sir, as I stated a line is already existing between Vizag and Kirundal for transporting iron ore. The Railway is getting Rs. 2 crores daily from that route towards freight charges. But it is regrettable that no passenger train is introduced in this route.

Malkangiri district also comes under my Constituency. It is revealed from a survey that 240 million tonnes of high grade lime stone is reserved at Kotameta Nandiveda in that district. If a survey is conducted in the adjoining areas additional deposit of lime stone will be found. These lime stone deposit areas are located on one side of river Shabari. The Bastar areas of Chhatisgarh is on the other side of the river. These are the largest lime stone mines and a number of lime stone based cement industries could be set up in that area. The installed capacity of a cement plant of such nature may come to around three million tonne. A number of private sector companies are keen to set up cement plant in that area. But the problem is communication. The distance between Jeypore and Kotameta is 145 km. So there is a need to connect Kotameta by rail with Jeypore. The VALTAS has conducted a survey for laying a 145 km railway line between Kotameta and Jeypore. The estimate cost of that proposed line is 650 crores. The establishment of a such cement plant is not possible unless a railway line is constructed. All the implements and machineries required for the establishment of plant are to be carried by rail to Kotameta via Jeypore, Baipariguda, Govindapallai, Mathili, Malkangiri, Sikapalli and Dharampalli.

Sir, Nawarangpur is an old commercial town and the traders there have commercial relation with Vizianagram and Vishakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. They find it very difficult to transport and import goods from Nawarangpur to these commercial cities as the rail transport facilities are not available. They are not able to go to those cities by rail as such facilities are not available. Sir, there were provisions in the Railway Budget of 2000-01, 2001-02 to undertake survey for laying rail lines between Jeypore and Malkangiri and also from Jeypore and Nawarangpur. The people of my Constituency were very hopeful for having the provision of survey for railway lines to their areas after 50 years of Independence. But it is regrettable that there is no financial provisions in the current year's Railway Budget to undertake survey for such lines in my Constituency. In view of this, I demand that the Honourable Railway Minister realizes the need of the

people of that area and also to make adequate financial provision to start the construction of the railway lines from Jeypore to Malkangiri and Jeypore to Nawarangpur.

Sir, Hirakhand Express runs between Bhubaneswar and Koraput and Howrah-Sambalpur Samaleswari Express has also been extended to Koraput. There is a need to extend these two trains to Jagdalpur in Chhatisgarh which is only 125 km away from Koraput. These trains will pass through my Constituency if they are extended to Jagdalpur. The people of my Constituency will be greatly benefited from these two trains. The Railways will also get additional revenues. So, I request the Railway Minister to look into my suggestion.

Lastly, Sir, the people of Nawarangpur depend upon Koraput, Rayagada, Kesinga, Raipur, Vizianagram and Vishakhapatnam railway station for their onward rail journey. A large number of people go to these places every day to board trains to go to their destinations. They find it very difficult to get reservation to perform their journey. Sometimes they stay there overnight to arrange reservation. If a Booking Counter is opened at Nawarangpur they will be benefited to a greater extent. Therefore I request the Honourable Railway Minister to set up a Booking Counter at Nawarangpur.

With these words, I thank you once again for allowing me to participate in the discussion and conclude my speech.

*SHRI LAKSHMAN SETH (Tamluk): Sir, today I table through you the following proposals to Hon'ble Rail Minister for his favourable consideration.

- (1) Estimated fund should be allotted for completion of Tamluk-Digha Railway project by the month of December 2003.
- (2) It is found from your budget speech that Port connectivity projects has been identified. But it is not known whether connectivity project for Haldia Port has been included.

For this purpose I suggest the following:

- (1) New line from Uluberia to Budge through bridge over Hoogly River.
- (2) New line from Uluberia to Haldia through bridge over Rup Narayan River.
- (3) Double line-Panskura Haldia.

Administrative sanction for only 1st phase has been given by the Government with Rs. 20 crores for this year. So installation of double line up to Haldia will take huge time. Haldia is giving adequate revenue to South Eastern Railway.

Therefore, it is requested to allocate fund adequately for completion of double line by this year.

(4) Full-fledged Terminal at Padmapukur and Salimar should be set up with allocation of adequate fund.

(5) Additional line from Panskura to Howrah should be installed.

(6) Rail over bridge at Ranichak (Haldia) and at Bhogpur should be constructed.

(7) Halt Station at Ranichak (Haldia).

(8) All Express trains passing through Mechada Station located at adjoining of Tamluk District Headquarter of Purba Medinipur should stop at Mechada Station.

(9) As per declaration in last two budgets Models Station at Mechada, Kolaghat, Tamluk and Haldia should be developed.

(10) Identity Cards to Rail Hawkers should be issued.

(11) Minimum wages of Rail workers should be extended to Rail Contractors' Labour. 10% vacancies in Rail should be reserved for Rail Contractors' workers in the matters of regular service under rail.

(12) Journey time of Azad Express running from Howrah to Haldia should be reduced from 3 hours. Local train is taking 3 hours for journey with fare less than that of Azad Express. As a result patronization in Azad Express is not up to mark.

It is requested to look into these matters.

*SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR (Dibrugarh): Sir, this is a populist Budget. There has been no hike in passenger fares and freight charges. I hope this will not affect internal resource mobilisation for funding the development projects of the Railways while participating in the debate many Hon. Members of this house expressed their concern about the safety of the travelling passengers. Passenger safety must get more attention of the Hon. Railway Minister. I do not like to repeat the

points already mentioned by the Hon. Members. I only like to confine myself to the problems, hope and expectations of the people of North-Eastern Region.

Sir, this budget also lack proper focus and direction for the much needed development of Railway infrastructure in the remote N.E. Region. The Railway Ministry must recognise this backward region as their priority area of development, with more fund allocation for the new and ongoing projects.

Sir, I like to thank Hon. Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumarji for introducing few new trains to be introduced in the year 2003-04 for the people of N.E. Region.

1. Tinsukia-Mariani (Daily).
2. Puri-Guwahati via Asansole (weekly).
3. Dibrugarh-Amritsar via Varanasi & Lucknow.
4. Guwahati-Secunderabad via Vijayawada (weekly).
5. Okha-Guwahati via Varanasi & Patna (weekly).

and increasing the frequencies of Guwahati-Jodhpur and Bikaner Express from 1 to 2 days.

Now I like to draw the kind attention of the Hon. Railway Minister to some of the long-standing demands of the people of our region.

Doubling of the Railway line from Jalpaiguri to Guwahati. This will ease the traffic flow and create additional capacity on this saturated section.

In this Budget, it is proposed to electrify a total 1 of 375 route Kms. During the current year and by the end of March 2003, 16376 route kms (25.98%) railway line of Indian Railways will be electrified. But I am sorry to draw the attention of Hon. Railway Minister, that till today your ministry has not taken any step to start the work of Railway line electrification in the whole of N.E. Region. I demand immediate step must be taken to start the work of electrification from Guwahati to Dibrugarh.

This year budget also failed to include Gauge conversion of Rangia to Murkongehalek as this is the only railway line on the North bank of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. This Gauge conversion demand your immediate consideration.

A long standing demand of the people of Upper Assam is to be fulfil by extending the Avadh Assam Train upto Dibrugarh.

[Shri Paban Singh Ghatowar]

The Inter City Train between Guwahati to Tinsukia must be extended upto Dibrugarh for the benefit of the travelling passenger of Dibrugarh town & district.

I am thankful to the Hon. Railway Minister for his kind consideration to our long standing demand for connecting Moranhat to Dibrugarh by B.G. line. I request him to complete this work as early as possible.

The Railway Station of Dibrugarh to Leekhapuni Lines are very old and without proper passengers amenities. I am requesting for your early consideration for the renovation and re-construction of all these very old stations.

Hon. Railway Minister in his budget Speech has mentioned about the Mega Bridge project of Bogibeel. This is one of the major project for the people of upper Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. We all want this project to be completed within the schedule time. The estimated cost of the bridge is more than 1100 crores and the approximate expenditure to the end of 2002-03 is about only 74.14 crores. Provision for 2003-04 is only 60 crores. This work need to be expedited and more fund should be allocated for this mega bridge on priority basis and see that the project is completed well in time. The Hon. Railway Minister has dedicated this year as passenger Amenities year. I like to draw your kind attention to some of the difficulties faced by the travelling passengers of our region.

- (i) The safety of the passengers is one of the most important responsibility of the Railway, it more so in N.E. Region. You have to take more adequate steps in this region in consultation with respective State govts. in this regards.
- (ii) Passengers Amenities should be increased in the Railway stations of this region as there are backing very much. I request you to take necessary steps for early rectification of all these deficiencies.
- (iii) The compartments of the passenger trains (Mail & Express) are very old and this causes lot of inconvenience for the travelling passengers. All these should be gradually replaced by new compartment on priority basis.

I also welcome the decision of Hon. Railway Minister to recruitment of Group 'D' Staff by Railway Recruitment Board on Division wise and also to sent question paper in local language. This will definitely encourage the educated unemployed youth of the region. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to give priority to the youth of this region in future recruitment as the representation of this region in Railway is very poor.

Considering the remoteness and communication difficulties of the N.E. Region Hon. Finance Minister must give budgetary support to the major projects of this region as support given to the projects of the Jammu & Kashmir State.

At the end I request the Hon. Railway Minister to take all possible steps so that the people of my region also feel and appreciate that the Indian Railway in its true sense is the garland of National integration of our great country.

[Translation]

*SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH (Mandi): I support the Railway Budget 2003-04 presented by hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar on 26 February, 2003. First of all Sir, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for having presented such a balanced and people oriented Budget.

Hon. Minister has taken many praiseworthy steps of which I would like to make a brief mention keeping time constraints in mind. While expressing hope of bringing down operational expenditure by Rs. 850 crores by constant monitoring and taking austerity measures, hon. Minister has not only made a formal announcement of celebrating Indian Railways' 150th year of establishment as Passenger Amenities year but has also promised to adopt this year as 'Passenger Satisfaction Year' and to take several steps regarding security and safety in railways as well punctuality and cleanliness.

Railway have taken an important decision by signing an MOU with NTPC for a joint venture for setting up of a Thermal Power Plant with a capacity of One thousand Megawatt at Navinagar.

It is known to every one that encroachment of thousands of acres of railway land on either side of tracks is at full swing. The railways have taken a highly praiseworthy step by signing as MOU with Indian Oil Corporation on 12 February, 2003 whereby an alternative fuel in the form of bio-diesel with the help of 'Ratan Jyot' will be prepared on this barren land. It will not only ensure proper use of this land but will also cut expenditure on fuel. I would like to thank the hon. Minister of Railways for having made provision for laying 225 kms long new line and gauge conversion of 775 kms line.

Sir, I am sorry to say that Himachal has been continuously neglected by the Railway Minister since India's independence. Even a common man in Himachal says that Kalka-Shimla and Pathankot-Jogendranagar

*Speech was laid on the Table.

railway line was laid by the English and subsequently only 16 kms long line between Nangal Dam to Una has been laid and now another 16 kms line from Una to Churud is proposed to be laid. Thus we have got nothing except 32 kms of rail line in 55 years. I am happy that the Government has now paid attention towards Jammu and Kashmir and North-Eastern region. But one thing should be born in mind that sometimes imbalanced development of States give rise to terrorism. Himachal is a peace loving State, so is it getting its reward? I would like to draw attention of hon. Minister towards some of the problems of Himachal Pradesh. Sir, I have been demanding for gauge conversion of Pathankot-Jogendranagar narrow gauge line. I have raised this demand inside and outside the House also. His Predecessor Minister Kumari Mamta Banerjee had also given an assurance in the House but nothing has been done in this regard so far.

Hon. Minister had promised that Bhanupalli Bilaspur-Ghagas railway line would be laid on the lines of Konkan railway as joint venture with 75 per cent contribution of Himachal Pradesh and 25 per cent contribution of Central Government. But no progress has been made so far. Years back survey was conducted for laying Saharanpur-Ponta line but no progress has been made so far. Not to speak of this, take the case of Kalka to Parvanoo, which is just at 2 kms distance. Three years ago hon. Minister had inaugurated a railway station at Parvanoo, but I am quite dismayed to say that nothing has been done so far except inauguration. As far as my constituency is concerned, some work was done by Britishers and thereafter only regress has been done, i.e. railways have marched some steps backward. Sir, Jogendranagar falls under my Parliamentary Constituency, Mandi. A narrow gauge line exists between Ghatta to Jogendranagar. British Government conducted a survey in 1923 by making a tunnel near Bhubhu for providing rail connectivity up to Kullu. Perhaps, this survey report may be available with Ferozpur division even today. Though construction of a tunnel is easy today, no progress has been made despite repeated reuses made by me.

Sir, we have been demanding for overbridge at Delux crossing number 340 on Pathankot-Jogendranagar railway line since 1997. Being a peoples' representative I have met the then Ministers such as Ramvilas Paswan, Kumari Mamata Banerjee, State Minister Shri Digvijay Singh and present Minister Shri Nitish Kumar many a times. Even a delegation of Sangnehud Panchayat met hon. Minister on 30.11.02 at his Parliament House office and had detailed talks with Shri Kaul, Executive Director and other

officers present there. As depth of this line is 10 feet and available width at this place is only 15 feet a crossing cannot be constructed but an over bridge can be so that villagers can have road connectivity.

Sir, as per the rules, railway is supposed to construct such bridges whereas it is demanding Rs. 35 lakh for this bridge. Trains will not ply on this bridge, it would be used for other vehicles. Sir, as the sources of revenue of Himachal are limited so it is justified to demand Rs. 35 lakhs from them for this minor bridge. I have been asked to get estimates prepared from PWD. They worked out an estimate of Rs. 8 lakhs 45 thousand and 7 hundred rupees in place of 35 lakhs and I handed over it to Divisional Manager, Ferozpur, Shri H.C. Punia in presence of the then Minister of State, Shri Digvijay Singh on 11.6.2002 and hon. Minister directed him to study the estimate and apprise him later on. Not to speak of any action, Shri Punia has not even replied to any letter so far. I brought this matter to the kind attention of hon. Minister and Executive Director Shri Kaul accepted my suggestion that said bridge will be got constructed by Himachal Pradesh PWD and until and unless Railway Minister is satisfied bridge will not be opened for traffic. In addition, I have been demanding for a railway crossing D-331 near Ghatta Bus stand in Mohan Ghati in Jogendranagar. Earlier there was a demand for Manned crossing so that people of Bhatvada Ahju, Matru villager do not have to travel 7 kms extra distance and can have direct connectivity with D-331 crossing on National Highway. My this suggestion was rejected. Then I had suggested that as the engine almost comes to halt near Mohan Ghati for cooling and it remain at so slow speed that not only young even aged persons can easily board or alight from the train. Therefore, local public should be provided facility of an unmanned crossing. Railway officials have not taken any action so far despite my meeting with hon. Minister in his Parliament office on 30.11.2002 and his orders to this effect. Sometimes, I get irritated as to how the demands of me, the representative of people can be met and what modus operandi we should adopt for this purpose.

Hon. Minister has sanctioned four computerized reservation centres in my Constituency. These are Kelag, Rakangapio, Kullu and Manali but so far only one centre at Manali has been opened. My submission is that reservation centres at three other places should also be opened shortly. I not only hope, I am confident that my request would not go futile today.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (Adoor): Thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget.

Sir, the people of Kerala as well as the commuters of Kerala are not happy with the Railway Budget (2003-04), which was presented by the hon. Railway Minister.

Sir, after many years, the last two Railway Budgets have done justice to Kerala. However, the development of railway network in Kerala was not seriously considered in this year's Railway Budget. The last two Railway Budgets have given the indication that the railway network in Kerala would be developed, but this Budget is not giving any scope for development of the railway network in Kerala.

The on-going projects in Kerala, like doubling, electrification, gauge conversion, introduction of new trains, completion of overbridges and under-bridges, were neglected. I do agree that the hon. Minister of Railways has allotted some money for these projects, but the actual amount has not been allotted. All the on-going projects are getting very meagre amounts and, therefore, the projects are not getting completed in time.

So far as doubling work is concerned, the Railway Ministry has included Kayankulam-Cheppad and Kayankulam-Mavelikara lines, and I welcome it. However, the allocation of funds is very meagre. I will request the hon. Railway Minister to enhance the amount allotted for doubling these two lines. If it is done, my colleague, Shri Ramesh Chennithala, will be very happy about it.

Sir, this Budget was presented, when the Railways is celebrating its 150th Anniversary. On this occasion, this Budget has not got any speciality, and it looks just like an ordinary Budget. Everybody knows that this Budget has been presented, keeping in view the coming elections. This year, elections for five State Assemblies are going to take place. The NDA Government wants to win those elections and, therefore, the Minister has increased the ticket and freight charges.

Whenever the Members of Parliament approached the Railway Minister regarding their constituency development, the Minister was always quoting the non-availability of funds as the reason for it. He says that due to severe financial constraints, the Railways is not able to take up any project. The hon. Minister also says that the Ministry of Finance and the Planning Commission have not allocated sufficient funds for the Railway. In

such a situation, without increasing the fares, how can the hon. Railway Minister run the Railways? This is only an eye-wash and, I am afraid, after the Assembly elections, the Railways may increase the passenger fares and freight charges.

Now, in my State, Kerala, electrification is most urgent for the development of the railway network. The electrification work on Palghat-Ernakulam section has been completed during last year, but the electrification work on Shoranur-Mangalore and Ernakulam-Trivandrum sections is still going on very slowly. Without sufficient funds, this electrification work will not be completed in the near future.

Sir, the doubling work on Shoranur-Mangalore line started some years ago, but still, the work is going on very slowly. The Government of Kerala gave funds for the construction of the Konkan Railway, but Kerala will get benefit from the Konkan Railway only after the completion of doubling of Shoranur-Mangalore line. The Railways has promised that the doubling work will be completed by 2004. I do not think that this work will be completed by 2004. I will request the hon. Minister to seriously consider early completion of doubling of Shoranur-Mangalore line.

For the project of conversion of Tanur-Kuttiapuram to Guravayur line into broad gauge line, the hon. Minister has given only Rs. 3 crore. An amount of at least Rs. 45 crore is needed for the completion of this line. The hon. Minister must consider enhancing this amount.

The hon. Minister has announced that more than 400 kilometers of railway line would be doubled in the next year. I would like to know from him as to how many kilometres of line will be doubled in the State of Kerala.

In Kerala, the electrification work is neglected. The hon. Minister has promised in his budget speech that electrification of 373 kilometres line would be completed in the next year. Kerala is getting only Rs. 22 crore for electrification of line from Ernakulam to Trivandrum. This amount is not adequate for the completion of this project. I would request the hon. Minister to allocate the total amount required for the completion of this project. I would request the hon. Minister to include electrification work of Shoranur-Mangalore line also in this year's Budget.

For the gauge conversion work of Virudunagar-Rajapalayam-Tenkasi-Quilon line, an amount of only Rs. 25 crore has been allotted in this year's Budget. The total amount estimated for this work is Rs. 160 crore. The first phase of this work which covers the line from

Chennai to Virudunagar, was completed years ago. The second phase from Virudunagar to Rajapalayam-Tenkasi is also going to be completed very soon. Work on the line from Tenkasi to Quilon is taken up in the third phase. However, the budget allocation is very meagre for the completion of Tenkasi-Quilon section. There is another difficulty in this line. In this section, the line from Tenkasi to Punalur falls in *ghat* area. Survey for gauge conversion work on this *ghat* section is yet to be completed. The Railway Engineering Division is yet to decide whether to convert this *ghat* section or to take up new alignment work. That decision is yet to be taken. Gauge conversion in Kerala is totally neglected. Major amounts for gauge conversion are being spent in Tamil Nadu area.

On several occasions in various meetings with the Railway officials, I raised this issue of delay in gauge conversion work in Kerala. I suggested to them that work on the Quilon-Punalur section should be taken up. If this work is taken up, it will be helpful for us.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH (Aurangabad, Bihar): Since hon. Members is reading ant his speech you should. ...*(Interruptions)*.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Sir, the Railway Ministry has no open mind on this. I would request the hon. Minister that the amount of Rs. 25 crore allotted for gauge conversion work of Quilon-Tenkasi should be spent on Quilon-Punalur gauge conversion work. Gauge conversion work on Quilon-Punalur line can be completed with this amount.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, please get his speech laid on the Table. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: That is not a healthy practice, Sir. The Parliament has to discuss all these things.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is it a healthy practice to read out written speech in the House? Now you conclude.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Sir, the hon. Railway Minister is introducing 50 trains during this year in his Budget Speech. Out of these 50 trains, Kerala is going to get only one weekly train which would run from Trivandrum to Jodhpur via Madgaon. This is highly objectionable.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now your speech is concluded.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: We have demanded several new trains for Kerala. They are: Trivandrum-Bangalore, Trivandrum-Mumbai, Trivandrum-Dehradun, Trivandrum-Chandigarh, Trivandrum-Mangalore. I hope the hon. Minister will consider our demand and sanction the trains in his reply to the debate.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat, Shri Chandra Pratap Singh and Shri Ram Naresh Tripathee laid their speeches on the Table of the House.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Development of railway stations in Kerala is very essential. Trivandrum Central, Ernakulam Junction and Calictu station should be expanded and more facilities should be provided at those stations.

Construction work of the new lines from Angamali-Sabarimala and Kottayam-Erumeli is going to suffer because of shortage of funds.

But there is a long pending demand from the people of Kottayam-Pathanamthitta and Quilon for extension of the proposed Kottayam-Erumeli line upto Punalur. From Erumeli to Punalur via Ranni, Pathanamthitta, Konni, Pathanapuram is only 60 kilometres. Actually, this line was surveyed up to Punalur. It was initiated by Shri Ramesh Chennithala. But due to financial constraints, the Railway Board cut short the route of Kottayam-Punalur line up to Erumeli.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Kadikunnil Suresh, now you conclude your speech.

[English]

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH: Yes, Sir.

Therefore, it is my humble submission to the hon. Minister to consider my request and include it in this Budget itself. In the last year's Budget, the hon. Minister had made an announcement and he agreed, in principle, for extension of Erumeli to Punalur. But so far, nothing has come out.

The point of setting up of new zone at Trivandrum has not been taken up this year also. ...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Kodikunnil Suresh, now you conclude and do not out now.

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now your speech will not go on record.

...*(Interruptions)**

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): Shri Suresh, now it is not going on record. Why are you speaking?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Suresh, please take your seat.

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar): Sir, the remaining part of his speech may please be allowed to be laid on the Table of the House. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, let him lay the remaining part of his speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

[Translation]

It is against the practice. Why are you discussing in this regard?

*RROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Sir, I strongly support the Railway Budget presented by hon. Minister of Railways. Perhaps, in the history of independence India such Budget have rarely been presented when passenger fare or freight rates have not been raised but many amenities have been provided. This year has been termed as Passenger Satisfaction year. It is good and definitely

*Not recorded.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

more passenger facilities will be provided. The announcement regarding concession in rail fares to senior citizens, cancer patients and filling up of vacant posts in railways and starting recruitment in RPF is welcomed. Concessions given to journalists are also praiseworthy.

Sir, special attention has been paid towards punctuality, protection, safety etc. Efforts should be made to minimize accidents and loss of life and property.

Sir, Rajasthan is the largest State in respect of area. Comparatively rail network is not developed in Rajasthan, therefore, there is enough scope for its expansion. I am deeply sad to say that very less funds have been allocated for sanctioned rail projects for Rajasthan. There is urgent need to convert Ajmer-Bhilwara-Chittor-Udaipur meter gauge line into broad gauge. The work on laying of line on already sanctioned Ajmer-Puskar line has not yet been started. Even last year's Budget allocation could not be spent. Even land has not been acquired so far. Allocation of quite less funds for land acquisition is also a matter of concern. There is urgent need to convert Bandikui-Bharatpur-Agra Fort metergauge line into broadgauge line. This line could not be accorded priority for gauge conversion so far. Though, commitment has been given to complete it up to Bharatpur.

Introduction of new trains in Rajasthan and extension of some routes is welcomed, Banswara, southern part of Rajasthan and Dungarpur are still deprived of rail service.

Sir, my heart felt thanks to him for increasing frequency of Ajmer-Mumbai Central to four days a week. Introduction of intercity between Jaipur-Udaipur via Ajmer-Chittor is also a praiseworthy step. I also extend my thanks for increasing the frequency of Bareilly-Newbhuj to four days a week.

But, there is no train between Ajmer-Delhi via Jaipur-Rewari during day time. Earlier there was a train, Delhi-Ahmedabad Express (9903/9904) run on the pattern of 9901/9902. The train used to leave Ahmedabad in the evening and reach Ajmer at 8.30 A.M. and the same train used to reach Delhi at night. It was a very convenient train. Similarly, the Ahmedabad-Agra fort local train was also very popular. But the said two trains have not yet started running even after conversion of the railway line into a broad gauge line. Therefore, the two trains should be run without delay.

There is a pilgrim centre called Pushkar near Ajmer where lakhs of people visit every year. The religious minded people of Rajasthan consider it sacred to immerse the mortal remains of the deceased in the river Ganga

and thousands of persons visit Haridwar every year. Therefore, a Haridwar Express train from Ajmer to Delhi via Jaipur should be run.

A large number of daily passengers commute between Jaipur and Ajmer. Earlier, people coming from Jaipur could use Bandra-Jaipur, but now the time of this train has been changed and this train reaches Ajmer at 11.15 O'clock after leaving Jaipur at 7.40. Thus it is not very convenient. Thus, in the interest of daily passengers between Ajmer and Jaipur, a train should be run which should leave Jaipur at 7.00 O'clock to reach Ajmer at 9.40. It should again leave Ajmer at 5.30 or 6.00 P.M. and reach Jaipur by 8-9 P.M. Running of this train would also lessen the burden on Ajmer-Jaipur National Highway No. 8 and the number of accidents would also go down. A DMU train should be run between Ajmer and Jaipur. A number of passengers belonging to Radhaswami sect go to Beas from this region. Thus a direct train is necessary. Another train should be run between Ajmer and Amritsar.

- VIP quota for Ajmer should be fixed in New Bhuj-Bareilly Express.
- A large number of passengers travel between Chennai and Ajmer Shariff. Therefore new trains should be run on broad gauge line between Chennai-Ajmer and Secundrabad-Ajmer.
- The frequency of trains between Patna-Ajmer and Howrah-Ajmer should be increased.
- Jammu Tawi-Jaipur (Pooja) Express should be extended upto Ajmer.
- Ernakulam-Jaipur train should be extended upto Ajmer.
- Marudhar Express should be run via Ajmer-Marwar junction for two days in a week.
- Ajmer railway station should be expanded so that the long distance trains of 24 coaches could halt at the main platform.
- Tinshed lights should be installed on all the platforms of Ajmer and these should be extended.
- Computerisation of Beawar and Kishangarh stations should be done without delay.

Sir, when you had visited Ajmer, you had felt the need of providing work to the LOCO factory at Ajmer in accordance with its capacity and accordingly the work

load of LOCO and carriage factories should be increased as per the broad gauge norms.

Sir, Beawar has a population of more than one lakh while Kishangarh is an industrial city having a population of roughly one lakh. Ashram Express (Delhi-Ahmedabad Super fast) should be give stoppage for two minutes at each of the two stations.

Shatabdi Express needs to be given a stoppage of two minutes at Kishangarh. Thousands of traders come from all over the country to buy marble from here.

The Loco and carriage sports grounds in Ajmer should be improved and brought up to the level of organizing national level sports activities. Approval for constructing flyovers near railway station in Kishangarh across Roopgarh Road, at Topghada and Jaunsganj in Ajmer and across Meal Road in Beawar should be given without delay.

The hon. Railway Minister has ignored Ajmer in the matter of setting up new railway zones and in reorganisation of divisions. The Committee, which was constituted in 1984, had recommended the headquarters of North-West Railway Zone be set up at Ajmer but instead Jaipur was made the headquarter where the cost of land is very high and crores of rupees will have to be spent whereas in Ajmer, which is known as Railway city, land is easily available.

While reorganizing Ajmer division, high revenue earning areas such as Kandla, Gandhidham have been linked to Ahmedabad. Similarly, cement industry area near Chittor has also been kept out. It will lead to loss of revenue for Ajmer division.

Sir, at the time of inauguration of the new zone at Jaipur and on the occasion of his visit to the Loco carriage factory at Ajmer, he had announced that at the time of reorganization of zones, the dignity of Ajmer will not be allowed to suffer, most of the employees would be absorbed here only, but unfortunately, the employees of traffic accounts and compilation office of the Western Railways which is located in Ajmer although Mumbai is the headquarters of the Western Railways are being transferred to Mumbai after the reorganization exercise. It is a gross injustice and the hon. Minister is not honouring his promise. It has caused great dissatisfaction among the employees of traffic accounts and compilation office at Ajmer. The workers are agitating and they are taking recourse to processions, rallies, dharnas and fasts. He is sensitive and true to his word Therefore, I request

[Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat]

the Government of India, especially the hon. Railway Minister to keep the traffic accounts and compilation office at Ajmer only.

*SHRI CHANDRA PRATAP SINGH (Sidhi): Sir, I support the Railway Budget 2003-2004. Hon. Minister of Railways has given due consideration to the passengers, senior citizens and accredited journalists and patients. There is no increase in the rates of passenger train fares and railway freight.

Sir, hon. Minister has laid special emphasis on the security aspect of trains. he has taken a decision to fill 20,000 vacant posts of group 'D' employees viz, Gangman etc. coming under the security category. I admire the concern shown by the hon. Minister. I would like to throw light on some problems of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh States.

Singrauli, falling under district Sidhi is known by the name of 'Urjadhani Nagari'. Earlier Singrauli was declared to be accorded the status of Railway Zonal Office. But no zonal office has been set up till date. It may immediately be set up.

Railway overbridge may kindly be constructed in Gram Sarai which could facilitate the commutation of students and other people.

A halt may kindly be provided to Shaktipunj Express at Shankarpur (Bhadura).

Passenger train from Chirmiri to Bilaspur may be extended up to Durg.

Chirmiri and Mahendragarh Railway station may be computerised.

Sir, I extend my thanks to the hon. Minister for announcing the rail facilities between Chirmiri-Reeva, Bilaspur-Reeva from 1st April, 2003 keeping in view the demands made by the people since long. I, once again extend my thanks to the hon. Minister of Railways and support the Railway Budget.

*SHRI RAM NARESH TRIPATHEE (Seoni): Sir, I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumar for presenting a very balanced, practical and people friendly budget. A number of railway facilities have been provided to the passenger without putting additional burden on them. Several arrangements have been made for the safety of the passengers. Even the current year has been

declared as "Passenger Safety Year". New trains have been introduced, speed limit and frequency of the trains has been increased. Sufficient budget allocation has been made for gauge conversion. New Zones have been created. I would like to thank him specially for creating Jabalpur zone. Mr. Minister, I hail from Madhya Pradesh where railway facilities are very less in comparison to its area. Madhya Pradesh is situated in the centre and is surrounded by seven States. Most of the traffic from other parts of the country passes through this State. There is a long standing demand to construct a new broadgauge railway line from Jabalpur to Lalitpur via Patan, Dayoh, Panna and Teekamgarh. Madhya Pradesh Legislative assembly had sent a proposal in this regard to Central Government long back. The construction of this important railway line would save the time and distance. Likewise a survey has been done for the laying of broadgauge railway line between Ramtek and Shreedhan which will shorten the distance between North and South considerably. This proposed railway line is also going to be an important railway route in the country. I hope that survey on these railway routes will be done immediately so that the construction work could be started there. Sir, it would be better if the survey on the proposed Jabalpur-Dayoh-Panna-Lalitpur railway route is extended beyond Jabalpur from Bheraghat railway station. Bheraghat is a famous tourist spot and is adjacent to Jabalpur city. The survey for this railway route from Bheraghat will save the department from various problems and will also help to promote this tourist spot.

Sir, I would like to thank the hon. Railway Minister for providing sufficient budget allocation for the gauge conversion of Jabalpur-Gondia railway route in Mahakaushal area. Mr. Minister at present there is only narrow gauge railway line in the whole of Mahakaushal area which was laid during Britisher's time. It is creating hindrance for the development of this area though this area is rich in metal and natural resources. However, in the absence of broad gauge railway line, these resources are not being exploited. The survey for Nagpur-Chindwara-Seoni-Nainpur railway line has been conducted. Please provide funds for the gauge conversion of this line this year. The broadgauge conversion from Chindwara to Seoni would benefit the people a lot. Chindwara has already been connected with broad gauge.

Sir, besides this I would like to draw attention of the House towards some other demands. Kindly make arrangements for doubling the single line between Jabalpur and Itarsi and Vilkhedi and Ghat Pidrai. On this track there is one single bridge on the river Tawa which is in a dilapidated condition and can give way anytime.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

so another bridge may kindly be approved as soon as possible otherwise the track itself would be closed. Computerised reservation facility may kindly be immediately started as the room for these purposes has already been constructed there.

There is need to construct pedestrian overbridge for going from one platform to another at the Bhitani Railway station near Jabalpur. Passengers have to face a lot of problems. As goods train remain on those tracks, people have to pass under the bogie bending themselves below it. Demand with regard to construction of other Bridge on the Shahpura bypass at Jabalpur-Jaipur National Highway-12 is also being made since long kindly accede to it.

People have been demanding for the stoppage of Narmada Express (Indore-Bilaspur) at Bhitani station. Similarly, not even a single train stops at the Karkawel station, kindly ensure the stoppage of at least one express train. Itarsi-Beena is a fast passenger train but fare of express train are charged which are excessive. Hon. Minister has reduced passenger fares and railway freight of many trains he may kindly do justice with the common people by reducing the fares of the said train too, this is what we expect from him.

Hon. Minister of Railways is a sensitive and a conscious person, the people of Mahakaushal are expect a lot from him. We hope that the hon. Minister would think seriously on these demands and would accordingly fulfil them.

SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA (Dahanu): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I extend my thanks to you for having given me an opportunity to speak. I also extend my thanks to the hon. Minister of Railways that he has not made any hike in the railway passenger fares and railway freight in his present Railway Budget. He has presented a good and balanced Railway Budget. Despite less funds in the Budget, he has started 50 new trains. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Shri Kodikunnil Suresh and Shri Chintaman Wanaga both are speaking. What is this going on, I do not understand anything. I request that at least Shri Kodikunnil Suresh should be given permission to conclude his speech.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have already said that the speech of Shri Kodikunnil Suresh is not going on record.

SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wish to extend my thanks to the hon. Minister of Railways that he has spoken about introducing a suburban rail service from Virar to Dahanu and has also made

announcement to launch automatic system this year itself. It is praiseworthy to start memo from Virar to Dahanu. New train has also been announced to be started from Surat to Mumbai. This train would pass from my constituency itself.

Sir, I would limit myself to my constituency in the discussion on Railway Budget. It is said that Delhi is the Capital of the country, but I would say that Mumbai is financial capital of the country. People from my constituency have contributed a lot to the development of Mumbai, but nothing has been done so far. First even train started from Mumbai to Thane. My district is so vast comprising 6 Municipal corporations, 8 Municipal Councils, 15 Tehsils and population of the entire area is around 1 crore. If we look at it from the point of view of population, my district is even bigger than many States, but whenever we make any demand from the point of view of Railways or demand for starting for new railway line, we are told that we already have a lot, but as I have said that people of my area have contributed a lot to the development of Mumbai. ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is no quorum in the House. Why are you calling. Why do not you get the speeches laid on the Table.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down.

SHRI CHINTAMAN WANAGA: Sir, I and my Parliamentary Constituency has contributed a lot for the development of Mumbai. Mumbai is surrounded by sea water. Mumbai supply us water but nothing has been given to it in the name of development. That's why announcement of Dahanu sub-urban railway service was welcomed by the people of my Parliamentary constituency. However, the work on this railway is going on in a slow pace. Some time limit should be fixed in this regard. When enquired even the railway officers remained silent on the issue. They are not giving us the exact time limit. Therefore, my demand is that the sub-urban railway service for Dahanu should be start immediately. Sir, Vasadiva connects Western Railways and Central Railways with my Parliamentary constituency. Doubling work on this line has been completed. We had made a demand to start sub-urban railway service. We had been told that it would be considered after the completion of doubling work. Now the doubling work has been completed. We have been told that the sub-urban railways service has been started but it is not. Passengers from Gujarat and my Parliamentary constituency Dahanu have to come at Dadar to go to Mumbai. Also we have to pass through Dadar to go to Thane district. The direct

[Shri Chintaman Wanaga]

railway service from Dahanu will facilitate the people to go to Mumbai directly from Thane, Kalyan and Vilasnagar.

Sir, I have contributed a lot for the development of Mumbai. My Parliamentary constituency is an adivasi area. The ponds which have been constructed in Mumbai are in my Parliamentary Constituency. Development has not taken place in adivasi areas till now. People are dying there due to starvation. That is why we have a long standing demand for Dahanu-Nasik railway line. The survey for this line has already been done but no allocation has been made in the budget for its construction. Hon. Railway Minister should make a provision for this also. During his visit to Dahanu, he had announced to open a computerised reservation centre there. I wrote several times in this regard but no steps were taken. Konkan is adjacent to my area Dahanu. Konkan railway should start from Dahanu. Only then it would emerge in real terms. Railway routes from Konkan to South should start from Dahanu. I live in Maharashtra but my station is Umergaon which comes in Gujarat. An express train has a stoppage here. This train has 22-24 bogies. However, only 4-5 bogies come at platform no. 1. The remaining bogies stand outside the platform. Though it do not create problems during day time but at nights passengers with their families faced lot of difficulties as 15-16 bogies remain outside the platform. Therefore, platform no. 1 should be extended up to Umargaon.

With these words, I conclude.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have received the speech of Shri Haribhau Shankar Mahale.

*SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE (Malegaon):
Sir, you have given me the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget for 2003-04. Sir, most of the Railway Ministers have been from Bihar, however, Shri Nitish ji is the first Railway Minister who has given most ambitious plans to Bihar from Railway Ministry. I have not grudges for him in this regard. I have great respect for hon. Shri Nitish Kumarji. He is a gentleman. Indian railways has crossed 150 years. The year 2003-2004 has been declared as passenger safety year. Several facilities have been given to the migrants. New trains have been introduced. Assurance has been given to run more and more electric trains. Railway has started making efforts to set up its separate power generating plant. 20 thousand new appointments will be made to run the railway safety management effectively. However, it is essential to utilize the man power appropriately and also to punish the guilty. Otherwise, railways suffers a heavy loss.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

Railway Board is following the same old system of management. The Employees of Railway Board are being treated as institution. Efforts are being made to bring about improvement in the Railways. It is essential to improve the existing system. Railway Recruitment Board has been made as an autonomous body. System of interview has been discontinued. Hence, no injustice is done to the applicants.

Sir, this year's railway budget has been prepared under the pressure of the Government and in view of the election year ahead. Hon. Railway Minister has tried to satisfy all sections of the society but he should keep in mind that to generate more and more revenues from railways, we should pay adequate attention towards commuters. All measures should be taken for their safety. However, no such efforts has been made in this budget. Railway Budget is supplementary to the General Budget. But here everything is different. Railway Budget will suffer the same situation like that of derailment of trains. Railway is sick today. It is reeling under the debt and has to pay Rs. 13-14 as interest on it. The criteria of the railway budget is not to make everyone happy.

A circular train has been introduced from the hon. Prime Minister's area Lucknow. Rs. 50 crores have been wasted. Sufficient number of commuters are not there for this train. Also the rail tracks are not available there. Railway has to suffer additional burden of electricity charges every year. Laying of railway has to between Jammu and Udhampur is really difficult and expensive. It is inappropriate to lay railway line in this area from environmental point of view. People living there will suffer a lot.

Announcement of some more concessions could be made in the House. Therefore, every effort has been made to garner praise. But, after an in-depth study of Budget provisions, it has come to my notice that there is no mention of the scheme which should have been given due consideration.

Sir, there will be Kumbh Fair in July, 2003. Nasik Road and Odha railway stations need improvement. Long distance trains should be given stoppage at Manmad and Nasik stations. An independent train should be introduced between Mumbai and Nasik. The number of second class coaches in Tapovan and Devgiri trains should be increased by 4 each. Power train should be provided stoppage at Nandgaon railway station and Nagpur train at Nyayadongari railway station.

A survey has been completed for the Pune, Nasik, Manmad, Malegaon, Dhulia, Nardana, Indore railway line

and thus a new railway line should be sanctioned. Survey of Nasik Peth-Valsad railway line has also been completed and should be sanctioned. Nasik, Triyambkeshwar, Uhanu new railway line should be sanctioned.

Efforts should be made to approve the Maharashtra Government's proposal for new railway line sent to the Railway Ministry. Grapes, onion and sugarcane are cash crops grown in Nasik district. Therefore, more wagons should be provided for their transportation.

Sir, Kirti Travels had an RTSA office by the name of Travel Care at RTSA, Central Railway, Nasik which was working satisfactorily. Many organisations gave them recommendation letters saying that they are an honest Travel company but the Railway people always asked money from them. On denial of money they made a false complaint to the vigilance against them and the vigilance cancelled their licence after inquiry. They have requested for the renewal of licence and through you Sir, it is requested to put an end of this injustice.

SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA (Bhatinda): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon'ble Railway Minister has presented the budget for the year 2003-2004 and many people have appreciated the Budget terming it a good budget. But, when I went through the Budget, I found it to be lacking direction. It is high on rhetoric but, in fact, nothing has been provided for anyone. A really good budget is the one in which something is provided to the millions of poor people of India but in this Budget nothing has been given to them. That is why, I call it a budget without direction.

It has appeased the rich people by reducing the fares of Shatabdi and Rajdhani trains. I believe that this budget is presented to appease to rich people. It would have been nice had the Minister given something to the poor people. Atleast, 10, 15 or 50% concession in the fares could have been given to the people living below poverty line but nothing has been given to them. The diesel and fertilizer prices have been increased by the Government. I think it would have been good if you could have given some concessions from your side. You have not paid attention towards the poor people and therefore, in my opinion much has been done in this Budget for the rich class but the poor have been ignored.

Further, I would like to submit that you have not announced any new train for Punjab. You have tied to please the people by extending the Jammu Tawi-Amritsar Express upto Ferozpur. Secondly, the factories being run under Public Sector, including Kapurthala Coach Factory and Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, complain that

they are not being given work. Why cannot the coaches imported from other countries be got manufactured by them? Why they are not given work while coaches etc. are procured from other big companies? I do not doubt the Minister but some officers must definitely be taking commission. Therefore, please keep an eye on them.

Doubling of Rajpura-Bhatinda line was included in the Budget for 1999-2000 but it has been excluded now without assigning any reason. Only Rohtak-Jakhal line has been doubled and not from Jakhal-Bhatinda line. I do not know why this happened. I had demanded a railway crossing. Fifth Takht of Sikhs in Talwandi Sabo is not connected by a railway line. I request you to somehow connect it with a railway line. Lakhs of Sikh people visit it. People from Ludhiana go there via Bhatinda and have to travel 50 Kms. extra. I demanded a railway crossing on that railway line. There is an under-bridge but not the over-bridge which I asked for. Former Minister Kumari Mamata Banerjee had approved it but you have withheld the permission. Thus extra 50 Kms. from Ludhiana to Damdama Sahib can be saved. It will become a bypass. Therefore, I urge you for its completion.

Secondly, you had introduced Bhatinda Shatabdi which was a welcome step, but I do not know why you have discontinued it? Probably it was incurring losses. Ten hon. M.Ps. had written to you to replace it by Jan Shatabdi. Instead of introducing Jan Shatabdi another Intercity train was started. I would like to tell you that it departs from Bhatinda at 5 a.m. Haridwar Express on the same route departs at 6.35 a.m. The third Intercity departs at 7.15 a.m. i.e. all the three trains depart at nearly the same time. Had you talked to me before fixing their time, I would have suggested you the time at which these should start. It would be beneficial to people if the morning train is run in the evening. I request you to run it in evening.

Besides, there is Rampura Phool Station from where potatoes are sent to the international market. There is no stoppage. Stoppage should be provided there. You have introduced Kisan Express which is a very good thing but it has no stoppage in Rama Mandi. Rama Mandi is the first station from Bhatinda from where grapes are exported to the international market. I request for providing a 2 minute stoppage there. ...(*Interruptions*) you have not done it so far. It would be very good if you agree to all these requests. There is an under-bridge in Mansa. We have asked to start the work there by providing 3 lakh rupees. You may be aware that Bhatinda is the largest Railway Junction in Northern India. There is no lodging facility. I request that a direct approach to platform should be

[Shri Bhan Singh Bhaura]

constructed there because one has to use overbridge and older people and patients are unable to go there. Therefore, it would be good if a direct platform is made there. Similarly, I demand about computerisation. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: The speeches of Shri V.S. Shivkumar and Shrimati Abha Mahato are being laid on the Table of the House.

SHRIMATI KAILASHO DEVI (Kurukshetra): Mr. Chairman, Sir, what we were and what we have become and what we will become, let us consider all these problems collectively together. Sir, considering the size of the organisation such as the Railways, the Railway Budget for the year 2003-2004 is not going to fulfil the expectations of the country. There is no other department or enterprise as big as the Indian Railways. The development and growth of the country. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have got 5 minutes only. Speak about the problems of your constituency. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI KAILASHO DEVI: Everyone got 15 minutes. Then, why only 5 minutes for me? I will finish my speech. ...*(Interruptions)*

Its importance lies in the fact that it is presented separately in the House. The Hon'ble Minister has not prepared a harsh budget this time which will definitely provide some relief to the passengers, but the hope to give a new direction to the development of the country and bring the economic growth rate to 8% through this Budget is not seen anywhere. Its total plan outlay is rupees 10,607 crore whereas rupees 1005 crore have been earmarked for laying new lines, which is totally inadequate. Since there is enough scope available for creating job opportunities in this department, it would have played a major role in dealing with the unemployment problem in the country if more provision for faster implementation of the new railway lines had been made in the Budget.

Industrial development of some of the cities has taken place at a great pace but they are not connected with railway line. The Railways can play a major role in the economic development of the country if these cities are directly linked with railway lines. I would like to mention about Haryana in this context. There is long standing demand in Yamuna Nagar, Kurukshetra and Karnal for connecting Yamuna Nagar-Kaithal-Patiala railway lines. I, too, had raised this issue many times in the Parliament but with no result. No solid action has been taken so far.

At one time, I felt sad to see two Chief Ministers of Punjab and Haryana pleading before the Railway Minister for providing stoppage of some Express trains at a particular station. The Railway Minister had made many declarations at Jind, where a rally was held but none of which has been included in the present Budget. The hon. Prime Minister also went to a rally in Kurukshetra where the local people mentioned many problems. But only one demand of providing stoppage of Shatabdi Express was accepted by the hon. Prime Minister which was fulfilled within a year while rest of them were ignored. One can easily make a guess about the progress of a country from the fact that the hon. Prime Minister visits a State and accepts only one demand of providing a stoppage of an Express Train. There, I realised that if two Chief Ministers have to plead like this just for the stoppage of an Express train, then where do I stand to ask the Government or the Ministry for laying some small railway lines? I am just an ordinary MP and my voice falls on deaf ears. I would like to request the hon. Prime Minister to allocate more money to the department which is really the base for development and for strengthening the economy so that the economy of the country can progress. But the situation is not same today, it has changed. The country became independent 56 years ago. There is more awareness among people. They ask their representatives for the development of their area and for the creation of employment opportunities. But, many times due to the negligence and carelessness of the Government and the Ministers, we become helpless and have to give vague reply to the public. People want work to be done. I would like to mention about Haryana. I am surprised to see that there is no mention about laying of any new railway line and providing a stoppage of any Express Train in Haryana. Both Haryana and Punjab are the food bowls of the country and many times they have to face the problems of transportation of foodgrains due to inadequate availability of wagons but there is no mention of it in the Budget. There is mention of doubling of the railway line from Rohtak to Jakhhal and I would like to bring this fact to the notice of the hon. Minister that this railway line is already doubled for the past many years. Only a 4-5 Kms. long stretch near Jind is remaining. I also met the hon'ble Minister many times in connection with the construction of railway bridge in Yamuna Nagar and over-bridge at Shahbad. I also mentioned about them to Kumari Mamata Banerjee many times. She gave assurance-but at the last moment when the Budget was to be presented, she backed out. How surprising is it that first a false assurance is given by the hon. Minister which is denied later on. The same happened with my problems. Due to many trains passing from there in a row one after another, the crossing

remains closed for long durations resulting in traffic jams for upto two and half hours. Consequently, many times emergency patients lost their lives on the way. The problems must not be ignored.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Speeches of Shri S. Ajay Kumar and Shrimati Minati Sen are laid on the Table of the House.

SHRIMATI KAILASHO DEVI: Problems relating to the Railways and development get embroiled in red tapism and thus cost escalation takes place. Red tapism should be done away with. Several 5-years plans get converted into 50-year plans like the Jammu and Udampur new railway line has not been laid so far. I would like to make a fervent appeal to the hon. Prime Minister that an important department like the Railways should be given funds generously by the Finance Ministry and the Reserve Bank because immediate benefits can be availed by investing capital in projects such as railway lines, dams and thermal plants. The whole of the capital can be recovered later with interest. Therefore, we should not look towards Foreign Banks for implementing such projects and rather we should have some faith in our own currency. On the one hand, the hon'ble Minister has not prepared a harsh Budget but on the other hand it is not upto our expectations also. More opportunities for development and employment could have sprung from it. Therefore, the hon'ble Minister should reconsider this Budget. A new railway line should be laid to connect Yamuna Nagar with Kurukshetra and Rohtak with Rewari. Railway lines in Haryana should be electrified and this Budget should be in line with the exceptions of people.

If changes could be made in the budget as per the expectations of the people only then discussion in the House will be meaningful. It should not be done that the budget be passed in a hurry without any changes even after holding full fledged discussion. Hence all our demand should be met and the attention should be paid towards Haryana which has been neglected in the railway budget and provision should be made in the budget for this State also.

[English]

*SHRI V.S. SIVAKUMAR (Thiruvananthapuram): I would like to mention following points regarding the developments of railway projects in the State of Kerala.

Even though the Hon. Minister has presented passenger-friendly budget for 2003-04 retaining freight and

*Speech was laid on the Table.

passenger fares without any hike was a positive step. However, the Budget is totally neglected the basic railway developments in the State of Kerala.

However, I request the Hon. Minister to include the following very important proposals in the supplementary demands for grant to satisfy the urgent need of Kerala.

First of all, I request the Government to take steps to include necessary budgetary provision for the doubling of railway line stretching 85 kms. in between Trivandrum-Kanyakumari sector. It may kindly be noted that the train vehicle units increased beyond permissible limit in the sector. This is the one of the busiest roots in the Trivandrum division.

Secondly, I would like to point out that the electrification between Errakulam-Trivandrum requires an amount of Rs. 81.66 crores. But the provision proposed in the Annual Plan 2003-04 is only Rs. 21.97 crores which is quite insufficient for this project. Therefore, the provision may be enhanced at Rs. 81 crores.

Further I would like to request to the Hon. Minister to include the following proposals in the supplementary.

There are no provision proposed for the new ROB's at Anayara and Meharanoor in the Annual Plan 2003-04. The train vehicle units at these two level crosses have been experienced at about 78,000 units crossing severe road traffic block in the city. Therefore, it is requested that the provision of Rs. 1 crore each may be proposed in the Annual Plan 2003-2004 through Supplementary demand for grants.

Dhannvachapuram railway halt is being situated beyond 24 kms from Trivandrum-Kanyakumari sector. Under Trivandrum division, this railway halt is located in a prime location very near to NH47 surrounded by so many educational institutions, banks and many Government offices within the radius of 300 meters. This railway halt maintains 3rd position as far as passengers earnings in Trivandrum-Kanyakumari sector. Therefore, it is requested that the Railway halt now functioning on contract basis may be upgraded in full-fledged departmental flag station based on economic viability.

Neyyattinkam railway station under 'E' category being situated in a Taluk headquarters second position in earnings and passengers in Trivandrum-Kanyakumari sector.

There is no provision in the Annual Plan 2003-04 for the introduction of computerised reservation facility.

[Shri V.S. Sivakumar]

Therefore, I request the Minister to take necessary step to include budgetary provision for computerisation.

I would also invite your kind attention for the following ongoing projects for which the budgetary allocation in the year 2003-04 is quite inadequate. Therefore, it is also requested to enhance the amount of Rs. 1 crore (40 lakhs sanctioned) for passenger crossing station and for satellite terminal at Kochuvali Rs. 2 crore (50 lakhs sanctioned) and for additional terminal facility at Trivandrum to 50 lakhs (20 lakhs).

I also request the Government to enhance the amount sanctioned for the platform extension of railway stations of Trivandrum division to 50 lakh to 2 crore rupees.

There is a long-pending demand from the State of Kerala for a separate railway zone incorporating Trivandrum and Palghat division with headquarters at Trivandrum.

I earnestly hope that the Hon. Minister will consider the genuine demands and expecting a favourable decision.

[Translation]

*SHRIMATI ABHA MAHTO (Jamshedpur): Sir, first of all I would like to congratulate hon'ble Minister of Railways for presenting unprecedented railway budget and strongly support railway budget. Hon'ble Minister of Railways has announced to introduce a new train from Tatanagar of my Parliamentary constituency to Amritsar via Lucknow and Saharanpur due to which not only the Sikh people of my area but also their brethren residing in Tatanagar, Lucknow and Amritsar would get the facility to visit Amritsar. Besides, Hindu pilgrims would get the facility to go to Haridwar and Rishikesh.

The government have also provided facility to the people belonging to poor class by introducing a new train from Tatanagar to Ranchi, which would be beneficial to the daily commuters. The Government deserves thanks as it has provided passenger halt in Kanimohli keeping in view the long standing demand of people of my Parliamentary constituency. By diverting the route of Rajdhani Express running between New Delhi and Bhubaneswar via Bokarao, Tatanagar, the Government have won praise from Industrialists and the people of Jamshedpur region are also very much happy. It is expected that due to this railways would earn more project in future thereby.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

As a result of starting Jan Shatabdi Express between Tatanagar and Howrah, the possibility of profit has increased. Earlier this train was running between Tatanagar and Ranchi and suffering loss. I congratulate the Government for making announcement to increase the frequency of New Delhi-Ranchi-Rajdhani Express and New Delhi-Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express via Bokaro and Tata Nagar from once a week to twice a week.

Sir, you know that Jamshedpur is an industrial city where the people, from each and every part of the country, are employed. There has been demand of extending 8181/8182 train upto Gorakhpur, presently by this train runs between Tatanagar and Chhapra. Hence, I would like to request Hon'ble Railway Minister to extend this train upto Gorakhpur on priority basis.

Further, one more demand of people of Jamshedpur is pending for a long time that 3287/3288 Tata-Patna Express train be extended upto Varanasi instead of Patna. Hence, my request is that this train be extended upto Varanasi.

I demand from the Minister of Railways that the name of the train, which has been announced by the Government, to introduce from Tatanagar to Amritsar via Lucknow, should be named as Jallianwala Bagh Express because it will remind us thousands of martyr's who fought against British empire.

Besides, the frequency of Puri Vaidhyanath Dham Express be increased from once a week to thrice a week and an express train be started in the morning from Hatia to Vaidhyanath Dham so that the journey from Ranchi to Vaidhyanath Dham may facilitated. A.C. chair car facility be provided in Vaidhyanath Dham Hatia Express.

I also request the hon'ble Minister of Railways that the Jharkhand Express, running between old Delhi to Ranchi should start from New Delhi in place of old Delhi to Ranchi should be regularized. The time schedule should not be changed.

Lastly, I request the hon'ble Minister that the name of Vananchal Express train, which runs between Bhagalpur and Hatia, should be changed to Rajmahal Express and made a daily train and its departure time from Ranchi should be fixed 6 o' clock.

[English]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal): Sir, first of all, I would like to congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for

his very innovative Budget which has been highly appreciated by industry, by the chambers of industry and the NDA allies. All going to the polls, they are very appreciative.

He has brought in ADB fund of one billion dollars for the Golden Quadrilateral as well as Rail Vikas Yojana. Coming from a poor industrially backward but richly endowed State in human resources, water resources and mineral resources and everything, like Orissa, I would say that it is a step in the right direction that from Rs. 194 crore this year, the hon. Railway Minister has given us the maximum of Rs. 306 crore in the last ten years and I am grateful to him for doubling, electrification and new railway lines. I was wondering that although it is a step in the right direction, it is rather late and too little. It is because if we look at the national average, the transportation as well as infrastructure of Orissa are inadequate in road transport, rail transport and air transport. Therefore, if we are to live up to the Vision of 2020 of His Excellency, the President's Address, then with this too little and meagre increase in investments of some of the railway lines which have been pending since the last ten years or even more, right from the time of Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and others and with a trickle of increasing by Rs. 1 crore or Rs. 2 crore, it will take at least 40 to 50 years for it to be completed. The time overrun and cost overrun will be very much more than what we are going to see.

A mention was made of connecting the ports. There is nothing to connect Paradip Port, Haridaspur-Paradip as well as Angul-Kamakanagar-Sukinda Road-Dubri which were sanctioned. You have allotted only Rs. 2 crore and you have given Rs. 1 crore earlier. First it was put in BOT (Build-Operate-Transfer) which has not seen the light of the day. The same is the case with Talcher-Angul-Gopalpur and Talcher-Bimlagarh which will be connecting industrial areas. There is no mention of that. As regards Damrah-Chanbali Port which the Government of Orissa is trying to develop, the hon. MLAs and MPs had called on the hon. Railway Minister and submitted a memorandum. But the need of the hour is increase in investment and a cap on implementation. If we do not put it, say, in five or six years, then there will be no accountability and responsibility and only the cost overrun and time overrun will go up and none of these will be implemented.

There is criteria which you have fixed for financing the Railway Budget. One is population, the second is size of the State and the third is throwaway projects. If one goes through the Pink Book, the Railway Minister's

statement and the two Blue Books on rolling stock and machinery, he may find that most of the trouble is that the States are unable to utilise the funds or there is delay in land acquisition or even failure to spend the amounts which you have given earlier in 2002-03.

Unless someone is held accountable and responsible, this money will not be spent and the railway lines will not be completed. Therefore, two other criteria which ought to be taken into consideration one. Orissa generates thirty per cent of the revenue of the Indian Railways. That has not been taken into consideration. That has to be taken into consideration. Second, Orissa has been penalised for controlling the population. Orissa is one of the States which has been strict with its population control policy. We are less than two per cent. Orissa's size is also small. We now cannot have expansion and become a bigger State. So, ours is a small State and it will remain a small State. Backward areas and interior areas of Orissa have not been connected. There are only two lines of the imperial Railways' time, which is 150 years old. One is passing through the periphery, that is Kolkata-Mumbai line and the other is Kolkata-Chennai line. There are no railway lines inside. So, Kurda-Bolangir-Lanjigarh road; Junagarh-Haridaspur-Paradip; Angul-Dubri; Khamakhya Nagar-Dubri; and Sukhinda Road-Dubri lines should be taken up quickly, within a time span of five years. Same is the case with Gopalpur-Talcher and Talcher-Bimlagarh lines.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Kishan Lal Diler, Shri Namdeo Rao Diwathe, Shri Dalpat Singh, Shri Ramshakal, Shri Kishan Singh Sanghwan and Shri Kallash Meghwal will lay their speech on the Table of the House.

[English]

*SHRIMATI MINATI SEN (Jalpaiguri): Sir, thank you for giving me a chance to raise some relevant points relating to Railway in West Bengal and in the area of North Bengal. It is disappointing that the budgetary allocations this year in most of the pending Railway projects in West Bengal are critically nominal. In other words, practically it does not present any new hope for completion of the projects in West Bengal. Although promises were made to run fifty trains in the country, but West Bengal's share is only five, out of which there is hardly any possibility to operate three trains owing to non-completion of the railway lines as yet. It is inexplicable that even though the job of construction of the railway

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shrimati Minati Sen]

lines is being carried out, I should say, the real problem or threat lines in protraction of allocations against these projects, which is bound to make an abnormal delay in completion of the lines.

My apprehension will collaborate if we make an in-depth study on the budgetary allocations towards the railway projects in North Bengal as an example, which will reveal a total picture of uncertainty. A budgetary allocation of Rs. 25 crore in phases has so far been made for the new Moinaguri-Jogighopa Railway Project, which still leaves behind most part of the project work, requiring a further allocation of Rs. 698 crore 89 lakhs. In another case, a budgetary allocation of Rs. 55 crore was made for reconstruction job of the railway line between Jalpaiguri-Bangaigaon, and the need is a further allocation of Rs. 60 crore. Therefore, I have an uncanny feeling over the budgetary allocations against the running projects. I have every reason to believe that the railway budgetary allocations pose lacklustre and portray only the greatest deprivation to the outcries in demand of completion of the railway lines by the passengers.

I had time and again raised my voice in the Railway Budget, in the question hour but no fruitful action has yet been taken. My proposals are Sir as under:

Upgradation of Raninagar Railway Junction Station on NFR as standard one has not been included. I urge upon the Government to make a spot survey of its feasibility and to take action for upgradation of the Railway junction station in NFR between Jalpaiguri and Belakoba in the district of Jalpaiguri.

Construction of double line track from Ambari Falakata Railway Station to Kamakshyaguri Railway Station of the NF Railway in the district of Jalpaiguri.

One fly over bridge be constructed over the State highway No. SH 12A at the manned Railway crossing between Raninagar Jalpaiguri, since the road is a very busy route to Nepal, Bhutan and North Eastern Region.

The level crossing gate causes tremendous inconvenience to the road traffic. Moreover, the level crossing being located at a sharp turn accidents are usual at this gate. The people of this region fell the immediate need for a fly over bridge.

Completion of alternative route from New Maynaguri, New Mathabhanga, New Cooch Behar to Jogikhopa via Baxirhat Golokganj-Dhubri, Belasipara and other along NH 31. This project should be immediately cleared in the interest of Railway and the people of eight districts of three State.

It has been announced that Jalpaiguri Road station will be model station no action has been taken so far. Nor any allotment has been provided for the model station in budget.

Considering the utmost urgency of the State including people of Dooars a super fast train may be introduced from Ex-Haldibari to Sealdah.

No word has been used in budgetary speech regarding inordinate delay in running trains to and from North Bengal. I urge upon the Government through you Sir to take some measure to minimise the problem.

I urge upon the Government to set up Railway recruitment centre at New Jalpaiguri to facilitate unemployed youth of North Bengal, Sikkim, Himalayan region and to appear at the Railway recruitment examination.

Grievances of Railway Pensioners. There is no hopeful light has been observed in the budgetary speech regarding Railway pensioner's problem. To avoid inordinate delay in releasing pension causing untold sufferings to the pensioners. I request the Government to adopt simplified procedure.

Stoppage of trains particularly ex-Sealdah bound and Assam bound express trains should be given at Falakata district of Jalpaiguri and open a new computerised ticket centre at Falakata.

Conversion of Oodalabari Railway Station from Flag/Hault station to a full fledged Railway Station and stoppage all up and down train at Oodalabari in Jalpaiguri. M.G. line in the track is now being converted into BG line, so there is a ample scope to convert Oodalabari Flag Station to regular station which may took into the matter.

*SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR (Ottapalam): Sir, this Budget lacks the much needed initiative for the over all development of the Railways in the country. In the 11000 crore, only 3000 crore earmarked for the developmental projects. It is the least amount ever allocated for the development process in the history of Indian Railways.

In recent years there is rapid increase in rail accidents. There may be several reasons for these accidents. A good portion of our Bridges are old and needs renovation or replacement. Many of the running tracks are weak and incapable of carrying the huge rail

*Speech was laid on the Table.

traffic. The Railway should give due priority for the safety aspect. The manpower shortage is also causing hardships in the performance of railways. I request the Minister to recruit sufficient personnel for the efficient performance of Railways.

As far as Kerala State is concerned, this Budget shows the continuing indifferent attitude of the Central Government towards the rail development of the State. This is one of the major hurdles in the industrial and economic development of the State. In the last year the provision of funds for development of Railways in Kerala was above 250 crores, whereas in the current year it is only 150 crores. Even though the Govt. announced the introduction of 50 new trains in the country, only one train is originating from Kerala i.e, Thiruvananthapuram-Jodhpur. Kerala should be given more trains namely: additional trains to Kannur-Bangalore and Bangalore-Thiruvananthapuram. And I also demand that the starting point of the Coimbatore-New Delhi Express may be changed to Shoranur.

Sir, a Triangular Railway Station at Shoranur is a long standing demand of the people of Kerala. The Department had conducted feasibility survey of the project and came up with an alternative proposal namely "Bulb Line" in the place of the Triangular Railway Station and this project was included in the 2001-2002 Railway Budget as a Budget Proposal. But in both the 2002-2003 and 2003-04 Budgets the Minister had ignored to mention this project and allocate adequate funds. Like wise the demand for the electrification of Shoranur-Mangalapuram Line and also the construction of a Rly. Over Bridge at Pattambi Town were found no mention. Sir, in the Budget for the Shoranur-Kuttipuram doubling work, rupees 30 Crore is given. But this amount is quite inadequate as the completion of this project require at least Rupees 150 crores to complete the work by 2005. Another point Sir, I have been requesting the Government for providing stops for the Executive Express at Vadakkanchery, Kerala Express at Ottappalam and Kurla at Pattambi, but so far no action has been taken in this regard.

Sir, I therefore, request the Minister to review the stand and allot adequate funds for the development of Railways in the State of Kerala.

[Translation]

*SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA (Dhandhuka): Sir, I am thankful to you for giving time to speak on Railway Budget. There is enthusiasm all over the country after

*Speech was laid on the Table.

the presentation of railway budget by hon'ble Nitish Kumarji. In my opinion, for the first time such a thing has happened in the budget that fare has been decreased instead of increasing. Furthermore, many trains have been introduced with a view to provide railway link in every part of the country. Many Shatabdi Trains have been introduced and the frequency of many Rajdhani trains has also been increased.

Besides, while considering the traffic, great concern regarding the facility of people has also been expressed in this budget. While expressing concern over the increasing number of accidents due to human error, efforts made by the Government to prevent such accidents by using electronic machinery, are appreciable. I have been elected from Gujarat for the fifth time. Gujarat has also been covered in this Budget. For the first time a new train has been introduced from Junagarh to Mumbai, railway routes has been extended upto Kutch-Bhuj and the work of gauge conversion from meter gauge to broad gauge is going on. My Parliamentary constituency has around 750 villages and 19 cities. In Saurashtra region Vairawal-Junagarh-Rajkot, Bhavnagar-Surendranagar via Botad and Pipavav-Surendranagar via Dhasa meter gauge is being converted into broad gauge due to which all trains coming from Junagarh and Amroli in my Parliamentary constituency Dhandhuka have been discontinued. The main reason for withdrawing these trains is that Botad-Ahmedabad is meter gauge which is being converted into broad gauge. As a result, citizens, farmers, students, traders, daily commuters and service men, residing in important cities lie Gadhdha, Botad, Dhandhuka, Dhauka and Bhawla and villages of my region are facing many difficulties. I have raised the Question regarding this matter in the House also several times and being a member of that constituency it is my primary duty that I should reflect the problems of my people in my constituency before you and request for their solution.

That is why I urge upon you to take up the work of converting Batoda-Ahmedabad meter gauge line into broad gauge. Besides, if broad gauge line is laid from Dhasa-Batoda Gujarat will be connected with entire Saurashtra.

There is a very big marketing centre in Bavla under my Parliamentary Constituency from where lakhs of tonnes of rice is being exported. Besides, there are big industrial areas like Dholka, Changodar, Kairala, from where various products are sent to different parts of the country by rail. Batoda city is an important centre for agricultural products in Gujarat besides it is also an important centre for Diamond cutting which attract many visitors.

[Shri Ratilal Kalidas Varma]

Running of Ahmedabad-Bairawal, Somnath Mail, Ahmedabad-Bairawal, Girnar Express and Ahmedabad-Bairawal via Amreli local trains which were useful trains for the public have been discontinued due to the aforesaid gauge conversion work. I, therefore, urged upon you to first take up the gauge conversion work from meter gauge to broad gauge between Ahmedabad-Batoda and in order to provide relief to the various categories of passengers a local train from Ahmedabad to Batoda may be introduced at 8.00 in the night because there is no proper facilities of trains/buses to go to distant villages.

I would like to submit that the Chittaurgarh-Ahmedabad local train remains stopped at the station without any reason after its arrival at 9.00. The way you have extended the routes of various other trains I request that this train may also be extended up to Batoda. This will provide a great relief to the passengers.

If the meter gauge line which have been removed for broad gauge conversion, are extended from Dhasa to Botad, it will provide more facility to the passengers. As per my knowledge the distance between Dhasa and Batoda is 66 km. and the length of broad gauge line between Ahmedabad-Batoda is 160 kms.

Sir, the gauge conversion work of Viramgaon Mehsana meter gauge line into broad gauge line has been going on for years and now this work is in its final stage. The patience of this area is thinking because the small shop keepers, businessmen, and hawkers, who used to earn their bread at Katoshan, Daitroj, Rampura stations by doing business on the stations falling on this route have lost their jobs. Since this work has been going on for the last many years. They are so frustrated that they are migrating to cities. If work on this line is completed in this year only, we can at least convenience the people of this area. That is why I urge upon that this work may be completed at the earliest.

More reservation facilities may be provided for travelling to Delhi and Mumbai from Batoda, Dhandhuka, Bawla, Dhoulka, Sanand, Viramgaon etc. railway stations of my Parliamentary Constituency. Recently I have inaugurated the computerised reservation center at Viramgaon railway station. I thank you for this on behalf of the people of my area. I hope that similar type of centers will also be opened at Batoda, Dhandhuka, Bawala and Dhoulka so that the passengers can get correct information and get the facility of computerized reservation.

Sir, I would also like to submit that there is no proper cleanliness maintained in the trains. There is no proper

facility of lights in some of the local trains. Even the fans are out of order and there is no water facility in the bogies. Passengers are now preferring to travel by local vehicles instead of trains. Besides there is a need of deploying railway police in the trains particularly in night train for the safety of passengers and their luggage. Recently some cases of looting of small traders in the trains have been reported.

The level of the Railway platform constructed at Ranapur railway station is so low that it is causing great difficulty for the aged persons and patients to board the train. It is also very difficult for the students to board the train. So height of the platform should be raised. Besides, the level of the roof of the platform is also low due to which people face difficulties particularly in rainy and summer season. It's my request that other facilities such as availability of water coolers, benches for the passengers, retiring room etc. may also be provided at all the stations.

There are still some Railway crossings, where gatemen have not been appointed. The gates are closed with the help of chains. The farmers have to wait for hours to cross the railway lines along with their bullock carts and tractors due to closing of the gate for 2 to 3 hours. So the gatemen may be appointed so that the people may not face any difficulties in crossing the railway line and some people may get employment.

Our honorable Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee had assured the people of country that each village would be provided with Telephone facility and drinking water. But at some places people are deprived of these facilities there it becomes essential to take the permission of the railways to cross the railway line for laying of electricity and water lines and for that we don't get permission easily. So the procedure for getting this permission from the railways may be simplified so that the people of that area may not be deprived of these basic facilities.

There are places, where small culverts have been constructed to drain out the rain water near the railway lines but since no regular cleaning is done, the culverts are blocked due to which water is logged on one side of the track due to which there is always possibility of spreading of diseases among the residents of the near by area. These culverts are to be cleaned immediately. In fact, these culverts are meant for the drainage of rain waters but these culverts are being used by the two wheelers and pedestrians to pass through, when there is no rain. There is a demand to increase the width of

such culverts. There is one such kind of culverts in Bawal city. I urge upon you to kindly complete the work of widening of the said culvert.

At last, I would like to submit the railways have become an essential service for the people. People from all walks of life whether it be child of aged, patient or healthy, poor or rich all use this service. That is why, before the people get annoyed by railways, due to the difficulties mentioned above the said demands may be fulfilled immediately so that they may be satisfied. With this I thank you and pray god that he may be able to solve the problems of the public. With this I conclude.

DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH (Bhind): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I also thank hon. Railway Minister and Honourable Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who is head of the government and who have presented a railway budget for the common people, since so many years after independence. My colleague from opposition are also unable to criticize this budget much. Even if any one is criticizing, we can understand ones feeling because the arbitrary attitude in every field that was followed after independence has come to an end. Now they can not follow that. Previous Governments, which used to arbitrarily deal with the problem whether it be problem related with employment or railway canteen and believed in their own growth are now not succeeding in their efforts. This is for the first time that there is no confusion in any field. Every thing is being done according to the rules. That is why I thank the Honourable Minister for this. Some Members have raised the question of security. But they should go through the budget minutely they will come to know that there are number of measures taken for security in the budget. The issue of employment is being raised repeatedly but let me clarify that is the Railway Department where 20,000 people are going to get employment, whereas in other departments retrenchment is being done. I think we should thank honourable Minister Shri Nitish Kumar for this.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I hail from Bhind, Dantiya area. For the first time the name of Bhind has figured in the Budget. The Minister has introduced two trains for Bhind. Besides he has shown a strong determination to complete the work of Guna-Etawah by 2004, instead of its scheduled target of year 2005. I thank the Minister for this. Bhind is a backward area and is Dacoit affected area. The Minister has paid special attention towards Bhind. When the Minister mentioned the name of Bhind in the budget I received a number of phone calls from the people of that area welcoming the step taken for the development of the area notoriously known for Dacoits. No other previous government have done any

development work in this area but this Government and the Railway Minister have tried to bring Bhind in to the main stream of the nation. I would like to submit the Minister that while Bhind is notorious for the dacoits but it is also a district where from each house you will find at least one youth is employed in the Military. Whether it be a China war of 1962 or Pakistan war or Kargil war or combating terrorism most of the martyr were from Bhind only. But this fact has never been highlighted before the country. That is why I urge upon the Railway Minister that when the 1998, railway budget was presented, we requested the then Government and our request was also accepted to connect Bhind-Orai-Mahoba-Varestratga by railway. It was agreed to do the survey work of laying a new railway line in this area and we have tried to expedite the survey work. But no concrete step have been taken so far. So it's my request to the Railway Minister that if the survey work is over this project may be included in the Budget. So that the backward area like Bhind can be developed and it can be brought in to the mainstream of the nation.

Sir, I want to urge upon one more thing, Sir, last time, when our Railway Minister had visited Bhind to inaugurate new Bhind station he had announced that the facility of computerized reservation would be provided there. This work has not yet commenced. That is why it is my request that this work may be commenced at the earliest. Besides, there is Gwalior, Bhind railway line, which is neither providing any benefit to the people of that area nor giving any profit to the railway department. The main reason for this is that the Schedule of running of trains at this section is not proper. A train from Bhind should depart in the morning and should arrive Bhind in the evening so that the people from Gwalior can start in the morning and reach back to their homes by evening. Presently the timings of the trains is not suitable as such neither the people nor the department is able to get profits. I urge upon the Minister to kindly change the timings of the trains on this route.

Sir, there is an area by the name of Dantiya, which is adjacent to Bhind district and it is a part of my Parliamentary Constituency. Dantiya is a historical place. The nation wide famed Pitamber Pith pilgrimage is situated here. Followers of Jainism come from Sonegiri to visit this place but very few trains stops here. Sir, through you I urge the Minister that there is a demand since long time to provide halt of Ujjani Express and Jayanti Janta Express here. Last time when Shri Digvijayji was the State Railway Minister he declared that the halt of these trains would be provided but so far this has not been done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly conclude your speech.

DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH: Sir, I am concluding but let me put forward the demands of my area. Sir, there is heavy traffic at the railway gate near the station. There is gate on the either side of the Railway Station.

19.00 hrs.

As a result, it causes a lot of problems and such demand was also made from there. Minister of State for Railways had announced that a rail bridge would be constructed over it for pedestrians but it has not been constructed as yet. It should be included in the Railway Budget to facilitate its construction.

There is a village named Chitawa. I have been repeatedly demanding and has written many letters to the hon. Minister since 1996 when I first got elected. Many accidents have taken place because there is no railway crossing there. When I made tremendous efforts and wrote to the hon. Minister then the Department of Railways cited technical problems and said that the railway crossing cannot be made because one track is high and another is low there. When the Minister of State for Railways Shri Digvijay Singh had visited there and when he was apprised of it then he said that there is another railway crossing 1700 metres away from there an approach road will be made upto there. That approach road should be included in this Budget to facilitate its construction.

While travelling by train, we witness a great crisis of water. The passengers of upper class buy bottled water. Since 1996, when I came here, the sale of water has multiplied. Common people cannot afford to buy water bottles. Therefore, arrangement of cold and clean water should be made for them on the platform. There are only one or two machines of water so there is great rush on every stoppage. I want to make special request that there is need to pay special attention towards it.

In the Department of Railways, contracts are given for different works. Those who work for contractors, out of them passes are issued for some by the Department of Railways but they get the work done by the rest without issuing them railway pass. There is unemployment on large scale in the country. Boys of my district go for this work in large number. Young boys who are 17-18 and 19-20 years old do this work. They lose their hands and legs due to accident but they are given nothing in the name of compensation because there remains nothing on the record, therefore, the Department of Railways cannot force them. I want to make special request that

it should be dealt with seriously so that contractors may not compel them to any such work. If they take such work, the Department of Railways should give them some protection so that in case of such accidents they may get some help.

With these words, once again, I thank you.

*SHRI NAMDEO HARBAJI DIWATHE (Chimur): I want to discuss rail budget 2003-2004. Like book stall, fruit-stall, tea stall, STD booth on platforms, doctors are also required to be posted there. A staff strength of 4 including a doctor, an attendant, a nurse and a group 'D' can be absorbed in it. It can partially solve the problem of unemployment. I welcome the way one side concession is given for railway interviews. Similarly, all those educated unemployed who want to go for an interview should be allowed to go free of cost after they get their interview letters.

Vidarbha is a very backward region. Therefore, 25 per cent revenue from the fund of Vidarbha need to be spent for the development of Vidarbha.

The Railway Budget presented by respected Nitish Kumarji is for the 2003-04 full of discernibility and vision. I want to congratulate him for the concession he has given to common public especially the diseased passengers, passengers above 60 years and no hike in passenger fare.

Durg-Bangalore Express train has been introduced on December 25, 2002 on the birth day of the hon. Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. I thank him profusely for that also.

Holi river Vanganga flows in my constituency which meets Chulband river. Therefore, this train should be named Vanganga Express and it should be run three times in a week.

I represent Chimur Parliamentary constituency. Four districts-Bhandara, Gadchiroli, Gondia, Chandrapur fall in it, But rail line is negligible in this area. Therefore, I demand that the sanction for laying new rail lines (1) Vadsa-Gadchiroli (50 kms) and (2) Umred-Chimur-Varora (106 km), the survey work of which have already been completed, be granted.

Similarly (1) Rajnandgaon-Kurkheda-Vadsa-Armori-Gadchiroli, (2) Arjuni-Vadegaon-Lakhandur-Pouni-Pawani road, (3) Bhandara road-Bhandara-Adyar-Pawani-Pawani

*Speech was laid on the Table.

road and (4) Pawani road-Kanpa-Chimur-Varora lines should be included in this Budget. Chimur is a very revolutionary town and a major movement took place here in 1942, having a prominent role in India's independence.

There is a narrow gauge between Nagbhid and Nagpur. Due to lack of broad gauge, it causes a lot of inconvenience. It's survey has been completed. It should be converted into a broad gauge at the earliest.

Yashwantpur-Bangalore-Durg weekly trains has been introduced but due to low height of platform, 50 passengers have died in accident on this line and many accidents are expected. Therefore, the work of raising the height of platform should be done as soon as possible.

I have earlier demanded many times that there is the need of an over-bridge on Gondia-Balharshah rail line on which commercial towns like Desaiganj, Brahmपुरi, Arjuni, Moregaon are situated. It should be sanctioned and work should be started at the earliest.

The land of railways is lying unused. If that is given to educated unemployed on lease or given to footpath peddlers, it may increase the revenue of railway and partially solve the problem of unemployment. The case of Vadsa i.e. Desaiganj district Gadchiroli is still pending.

Vadsa-Nagvid junction Chanda fort shuttle should be introduced.

In Vidarbha express, Dadar express, Howrah mail and Gondwana mail, two berths quota each for Nagrid-Vadsa-Saundad should be sanctioned. In my Parliamentary Constituency there is not a single computerised reservation counter and people have to travel 150-200 kms. for getting reservation. Therefore, a computerised reservation centre should be set up at Vadsa station at the earliest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Rupchand Pal, Shri Ramchander Baina and Shri A.P. Abdullakutti are laying their speeches on the Table.

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I oppose the Railway Budget on the grounds stated in my speech and I am now laying it on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAMCHANDER BAINDA (Faridabad): Sir, I thank you for the opportunity granted to me to speak on the occasion of Railway Budget, 2003-2004.

Sir, after Independence it is for the first time in fifty years that such a budget which provides relief to the people of all class has been presented by the hon. Minister of Railways Shri Nitish Kumar. In the Budget of 2003-04 there is no hike in the rates of freight; on the contrary it has been reduced which will benefit common man, labourers, industrialist, landlord, farmer and every citizen of the country because the maximum carriage work and the work of carrying goods from one place to another is mostly done by trains like edibles, cement, coal, oil, gas and the materials used in companies, raw materials used in fertilizers, the reduction in the freight rates of above goods will benefit all citizens of the country. Hon. Minister of Railways has empowered the General Manager, Railways to give concession in freight up to 24 per cent which will greatly benefit the common public.

The passengers fare which was increased on short distance journey which caused sizeable shift of passengers from trains to buses which incurred heavy loss of revenue for the railways that has been reduced by the hon. Minister, I welcome it. Secondly, common passengers have been greatly benefited by the reduction in fare of luxury trains like Rajdhani, Shatabdi, Janshatabdi etc. by the Government. At the same time, the Department of Railways will also be benefited. While paying special attention on railway safety also, hon. Minister has announced 20 thousand new appointments which will also sort out the problem of unemployment and every passenger will feel secured during train journey. The proposal made by the hon. Minister for equipping Railway Police Force in a better way for strengthening security arrangement is also beneficial.

While speaking on this item, I would like to say that a special package scheme has been prepared to find out sabotage on rail lines for checking rail accidents. Implementation of that scheme will improve safety and lessen accidents also and will also check undue delay during journey.

The corporate world has shown its concern for the common people over the proposal to introduce 50 new train by the Ministry of Railways. Poor people will be benefited from the concession given to the senior citizens

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri Ramchander Binda]
and diseased persons by the Department of Railways. Recognised journalists have also given concession. It has pleased me.

The main feature of this budget is that the Department of Railways will earn a profit of two thousand fifty one crore rupees without any hike in freight rates and passenger fare. I hope it will also accelerate the pace of Indian economy in future.

Sir, now I want to draw the attention of hon. Minister through you towards the problems of my constituency, that my constituency Faridabad is an industrial area which is adjacent to Delhi. People from every State of India stay in Faridabad. A large number industrial units are also operational there but the long distance trains originating from New Delhi railway station do not have stoppage at Faridabad as a result the passengers of Faridabad have to go to Delhi station for every journey and on return journey also they have to go up to Delhi railway station. It causes a lot of problems to the passengers that, too, when all long distance trains pass through Faridabad. In such situation I would request the hon. Minister that all long distance trains should be given stoppage at Faridabad. I have already given you the details of some trains. Train No. HMK which runs from Kurukshetra to Nizamuddin. I request that this train may be extended upto to Mathura. I have already made request to the hon. Minister about this train that it is the demand of the public that this train should be run from the birth place of Yogiraj Lord Krishna to battle field.

The train Himalaya Queen which runs from Kalkaji to Nizamuddin. Its destination is Nizamuddin. This train passes through entire Haryana. It is the demand of the public of Faridabad that this train should originate from Faridabad.

In the survey conducted during the last five years no new rail line has been sanctioned for the State of Haryana and even after conducting survey the new track laying work between Palwal to Alwar and Rewari to Aligarh has not been done so far. I request the hon. Minister to take special interest in laying new rail line in this Mewat region so that the people of this region may experience the pleasure of seeing train or travelling in it after Independence. At that moment, I shall feel delighted.

It would be necessary to build a bridge on the railway crossing of Palwal-Aligarh route. Due to heavy traffic, Delhi route is closed. It has badly affected the Palwal route of Haryana. There is traffic jam for hour together. It causes a lot of trouble to the public. I, therefore, request

the hon. Minister to please get the construction of this bridge done soon under this year's railway budget.

The Department of Railways has given assurance to the public for constructing a bridge over Ballabhgarh-Sona railway crossing. I request you to complete that also in this budget only.

Sir, I heartily welcome and thank the hon. Minister of Railways for presenting the historic railway budget of 2003-2004 for the public. Through you, Sir, I request the hon. Minister that he should pay special attention on Haryana in this budget and the demands I have made for my constituency Faridabad to lay new rail line in Mewat, bridge construction in Ballabhagarh and giving stoppage of long distance trains at Faridabad especially two trains-Himalaya Queen and to introduce a train between Kurukshetra and Mathura so that the Department of Railways may not face additional burden and the people of Faridabad will get facility coupled with pleasure. Earlier also, I have written letter to you about Himalaya Queen. I have written letter to the General Manager, Central Railway, Mumbai. There is urgent need of these two trains at Faridabad.

[English]

*SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Sir, I rise to oppose the Railway Budget for 2003-04 on the ground that it is anti-people and fails to address any of the urgent issues related to:

1. Adequate Safety and Security in respect of Railway Travel.
2. Failure to extend Railway lines and construct new Railway lines as demanded by the people of different parts of the country for the past several years.
3. Failure to restore health of the railway economy.
4. Failure to provide adequate passenger amenities and necessary number of trains and affordable fare structure.

I would like to reiterate the following demands for urgent implementation in public interests.

1. Need to urgently construct foot overbridge at Bandel Station in Howrah. Division of Eastern Railway.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

2. Need to urgently arrange drainage system to solve water logging at the Bazarapara Subway and Platform subway at Bandel Jn. In Howrah Division of Eastern Railway.
 3. Need to improve passenger amenities at Bandel, Chinsura, Hooghly, Chandanagar, Bansberia, Mankundu, Adi-Saptagram, Mogra, Talandu, Tribeni, Banstesia, Kuntighat, Sheraphuly, Tarakeswar, Haripal, Singur, Nalikul, Kamarkundu, Howrah Stn. Sealdah Stn., Naihati, Hooghly Ghat, Belmuri, Shibaichandi, Gurap, Balarambati in Howrah Division of Eastern Railway.
 4. Need to construct link between Howrah-Bardhaman Chord and Tarakeswar Branch line somewhere between Nalikul and Kamarkundu.
 5. Need to arrange computerised reservation system in all the major stations in the Howrah-Bandel-Bardhaman and Howrah-Bardhaman Chord line.
 6. Need to construct a halting station at Hathigola (Dhaniakhali) between Belmuri and Shibaichandi in Howrah-Bardhaman Chord line.
 7. Need to construct a new Railway Station at Khurigachi between Bhadreswar and Baidyabati in Howrah-Bandel section of Howrah Division Eastern Railway.
 8. Need to urgently improve drainage system at the subways of Hooghly Station, Chinsura, Chandanagar, Mankundu, Bhadreswar, Srirampur and solve the acute problem of accumulation of water in these places.
 9. Need to construct a new level crossing at Chandanpur near the Chandanpur Railway Station in the Howrah-Bardhaman Chord line.
 10. Need to run Rajdhani Express from Howrah to Delhi via Gaya on all the days of the week.
 11. Need to increase the number of trains in the Howrah-Bandel-Bardhaman, Howrah-Katwa, Howrah-Tarakeswar, Bandel-Naihati section of Eastern Railways.
 12. Need to urgently repair and rebuild Jubilee Bridge between Garifa (North 24 Parganas) & Hooghly Ghat (Hooghly), Bandel-Naihati-Branchline in Eastern Railway.
 13. Need to complete construction and double line between Sheoraphuly and Tarakeswar.
 14. Need to construct double line in Bandel-Katwa section.
 15. Need to urgently replace overaged rakes.
 16. Need to urgently replace overaged wagons.
 17. Need to extend Kolkata Metro Railway from Dum Dum to Barrackpore and Dum Dum to Salt Lake upto Kolkata Airport via Rajarhat and to Ramrajatala in Howrah on the other side of the Ganges.
 18. Need to remodel Bandel Station, Chinsura, Chandanagar, Hooghly and some other sections in the Bandel-Howrah and Howrah-Bardhaman Chord.
- I oppose the Railway Budget for its failures as stated below:
1. Failure to ensure safety to the Railway Passengers.
 2. Failure to stop series of Railway Accidents.
 3. Failure to complete renewal of Railway tracks.
 4. Failure to provide adequate number of trains.
 5. Failure to provide affordable fare for Railway travel.
 6. Failure to complete the long pending Railway Projects of West Bengal like Disha-Tamluk, Ekalakhi-Balurghat, Bnd Budge-Namkhav.
- *SHRI A.P. ABDULLAKUTTY (Cannanore): Sir, following points I raise in my rail budget speech:-
1. In my constituency Kannur there is only 50 km Railway line. In between there are many bridges. All constructed by Britishers. All are very old. Its conditions is very poor. Please maintain immediately the following bridges: Valapattanam Bridge, Darmada Bridge, Nadal Bridge and Pazhangadi Bridge. I come to Modernisation of Kannur Railway Station.
 2. Kannur Railway is recently declared modern station. But Sir its conditions is very bad. Please allot special fund for the station.
 - a. We want new platform and booking centre in the west side of the station.
 - b. We want retiring room with dormitory facilities.

[Shri A.P. Abdullakutty]

- c. There is so many area waste land. My suggestions this land used for construction for multi purpose commercial building.

Railway can get more revenues and good development. I come to Allot New LC at Erinave.

Sir, I ready to spend Rs. 20 lakh MPLADS Funds for construction of new Level Crossing. This level crossing is very essential demand is long pending. Please sanction new LC at Erinave.

[Translation]

SHRI JOACHIM BAXLA (Alipurduars): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I would like to thank you for giving me a chance to speak on the rail budget 2003-2004. I would like to draw your kind attention directly towards my constituency. Whatever the hon. Minister of Railways has announced regarding my constituency, gauge conversion is included in that and it has been stated that after gauge conversion from New Jalpaiguri to Newbogaigaon via Siliguri daily rail service will be available there. He has announced to provide New Rail Service from New Jalpaiguri to Alipurduars. I fail to understand how the train will travel from Newjalpaiguri to Siliguri via Alipurduars. Alipurduars junction has no connection with Siliguri. Hon. Minister of Railways must clarify regarding this.

Mr. Chairman, Sir gauge conversion work is being done from Newjalpaiguri-Siliguri-Newbogaigaon, which has to be completed upto March 2004 but hon. Minister has sanctioned only Rs. 50 crores for the purpose. I do not believe that this amount is sufficient enough to complete the job. Hon. Minister, Sir, has announced that after the gauge conversion Sealdah-Newjalpaiguri-Kanchan Kanya Express will be extended upto Alipurduars. So I request to regularize the train.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had been requesting for the many past years that on the demand of the public of Jalpaiguri, Koochbihar, Kamrup, Gwalpara districts sanctioned projects must be completed immediately to start New Mainaguri-Jogighopa Rail Service. Hon. Minister had given assurance for that. Only rupees 25 crores has been allocated for these projects. I think this amount is insufficient. I request Minister of Railways through you to allocate more fund for this project as early as possible.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Hon. Minister had assured to start the gauge conversion of New Mal junction-Chingrabanda Rail Line after its inauguration but it is not mentioned in the present budget. I fear that the job of gauge conversion will be completed from Newjalpaiguri to Bogaigaon only,

the line which has been restored. Now we are talking about a new rail service upto New Mal-Chingrabanda-Jogidhipa. I would like to know from the Minister that how long will it take to start this job?

Mr. Chairman, Sir, construction of a foot-bridge was requested to reach to Akibari colony in Alipurduars to facilitate Railway staff and general public. I request to sanction this foot bridge in this budget. Along with this the fund allocation for gauge conversion of New N.G.P. may please be enhanced. This is in the cognizance of our Minister of Railways and I had been demanding this for the past 6 years to connect Guwahati in Assam to Bengal and Jharkhand. I was given assurance that these things will be discussed. I had requested to start a new train from Guwahati to Ranchi via Alipurduars in the name of Amar Veer Birsa Munda. But nothing had been mentioned about that train in the Railway budget. I urge upon the hon. Minister again through you to start that rail service from Guwahati to Ranchi in the name of Amar Saheed Birsa Munda. I hope Mr. Minister would say something regarding this in his reply.

With this I conclude.

SHRI BRAHMA NAND MANDAL (Monghyr): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

I rise to support this railway budget. Mr. Jaiswal was asking why I was rising as Monghyr bridge has already been sanctioned. I rise to say that hon. Prime Minister announced an allocation of rupees 15,000 crores for Rail project of entire country on 15th August, 2002 and in this budget Rail Development Board has been set up and eight crores of rupees have been allocated for four Mega bridges and Munghyr bridge is one among them. So I support this budget and want to thank Mr. Prime Minister and Minister of Railways. The infrastructure thus created will generate big employment opportunities and a huge infrastructure will be created which will accelerate economy. That's why also I support this budget.

I would like to say regarding Munghyr bridge that its cost is 921 crores of rupees after the survey and railway's share is Rs. 529 crore in this Rs. 600 crores were allocated in the supplementary budget of 1997-98 but it was reduced to Rs. 529 crores after survey. Rs. 5 crore were spent on survey. This time only Rs. 30 crores are allocated for that. I understand that for the big projects, their execution must be time-bound and according to survey report, this bridge is to be completed within 6 years. If Rs. 30 crores are given per year. This bridge will take 16 years to get completed. At least Rs. 100

crores should have been allocated in this budget because it is said in this budget that funds will be arranged from foreign banks and from other places too. Railway should have at least 100 crores of rupees per year as its own share and the portion of Road construction will be decided by Ministry of Surface Transport while forwarding its demand. It was decided that Transport Ministry will have to give later on, so for the one or two years railway should initiate the work.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I will say that still there is time because once the duration of project increases, its cost also increases. Once cost increases, it breeds corruption, and to check these two things and to strengthen the economy of the country it is necessary to have a time-bound programme so instead of Rs. 30 crores, Rs. 100 crores must be allocated each year, this railway line will be completed within time.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, secondly I would like to mention that the budget provision for the doubling of Kajra Quel rail line is insufficient. It will cost Rs. 21 crores and 45 lakh but only Rs. 2 crore and 56 lakh have been allocated for this. If the work goes on like this then its doubling will be completed in 10 years. I request that at least Rs. 4 crore should be allocated per year, so that the doubling can be completed within 5 years.

Sir, one issue that I have been raising since long and Mr. Minister is also aware of that because we have discussed it together many times, he knows its necessity also that is the electrification job from Sahibganj to Quel in loop line. Standing Committee also recommended this job of electrification unanimously in the year 1996-97, but it has not been mentioned in this year's budget. This is necessary to connect rail factory also via Jamalpur. Money for box-wagon has also been paid, but the job of phase-II is progressing slowly. It will be good if this job is expedited.

Sir, the third thing I would like to say that a new railway line is required for the most backward area from Jumai to Garhi via Khaira. As you are aware the number of passengers from Sultanganj to Deoghar is in lakhs but there is no railway line to Deoghar via Tarapur, Sangarampur and Belhar whereas lakhs of people from this area visit Deoghar annually. So I request the hon. Minister that there should be a new railway line from Sultanganj to Deoghar via Tarapur, Sangrampur and Belhar. Railway will be benefited and passengers will be facilitated because they can avail a comfortable journey by train in minimum possible time.

Sir, only one issue is left over. I want to finish that also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Madan Prasad Jaiswal is presenting his written statement on the floor of the House.

SHRI BRAHMA NAND MANDAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there must be a Rajdhani Express from Guwahati to New Delhi via loop line Jamalpur. Which is not there upto now. I conclude with this.

*DR. M.P. JAISWAL (Bettiah): Sir, I support the rail budget presented by Shri Nitish Kumar on 26th February in the House. I congratulate him for not increasing fare as well as freight.

I am grateful to him for the work done in my Lok Sabha Constituency. 2557/2558 Sapt Kranti Super Fast Express is not only a super fast train but also a super hit train. From the first day itself it has become a very difficult task to get reservation in this train. From my constituency now trains are running for Jammu Tawi, Dehradun, Howrah, Amritsar, Guwahati, Mumbai, Baroda and Surat also. I thank him for that. For my constituency, some of the following developmental works are necessary, please try to get them down also.

Chauri-Chaura Express, which runs from Kanpur to Gorakhpur should be extended upto Raxaul, a city bordering Nepal. Many people from my constituency visit Varanasi for their treatment, this train will make them comfortable. This train rests for 16 hours in the Gorakhpur yard whereas it will take only 8 hours for up and down journey to Raxaul. Now Raxaul has washing pit and Sink line facility also. This line will connect Vishwanth to Pashupati Nath.

Train No. 5216/5215 runs as passenger train from Gorakhpur to Narkatiaganj and the same train runs from Narkatiaganj to Muzaffarpur as Express train. For the same reason, those passengers who board in from Gorakhpur or other places are forced to pay fine and express charge and this becomes a gateway of corruption for railway officials. This train stops almost at all stations except halts and it covers a distance of 200 K.M. in four hours instead of three hours. So, I request that 5216/5215 be converted into fast passenger from Gorakhpur to Muzaffarpur to facilitate passengers.

Raxaul junction is located on Indo-Nepal border surrounded by a thick population on both sides of railway line. So the overbridge on railway platform should be extended to the both sides of station connecting railway roads on both sides.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Dr. M.P. Jaiswal]

Railway earns approximately Rs. one crore per month from Bettiah railway station, so the Bettiah railway station should be upgraded to A category.

5654/5653 Guwahati-Jammu Express does not stop at Sugauli Jn., whereas it stops at Chakiya and likewise small stations. Sugauli Jn. is connected with Raxaul Jn., from where the passengers from Nepal want to board in Jammu-Tawi-Guwahati Express from Sugauli. So the hon. Minister is requested to give 2 minute stoppage at Sugauli for this train.

Chanpatia city in my constituency is NAGAR PANCHAYAT and third largest city. So I request that Delhi-Raxaul Satyagrah Express 4047/4048 and Muzaffarpur-Bandra Express 5264/5263 may please be given 2 minute stoppage at Chanpatia station.

I am ready to give Rs. 10 lakh from MPLADS regarding Sheetalpur railway crossing. Please permit the construction of this railway crossing under special circumstances.

I would congratulate the hon. Minister connecting Sapta Kranti Express 2557/2558, with a new Express train which will be started via Raxaul Sitamarhi, Darbhanga and Jainagar from Narkatiaganj. I hope time table for this train will be decided accordingly.

[English]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity. From my Party, two Speakers have already spoken opposing the Railway Budget. I shall confine myself to my constituency and also to relevant points of my State.

First of all, I would like to say that condolence and sympathy messages should have been sent to the Members of the bereaved families of those who have lost their kith and kin in the railway accidents. Sir, as you know, one of my esteemed colleagues and ex-MP, late Shri Sushanta Chakravarty lost his life in the Rajdhani Express train accident. It should have been included in the Budget speech. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH: I raised this point yesterday itself. ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNIL KHAN: You have already mentioned about it.

Sir, starting from Gaisal, I would like to know how many accidents have taken place. Kindly look at

para 12. It says:

"One of the major contributing factors for accidents has been found to be human failure. Now, it has been decided to fill up Group D vacancies."

I welcome the appointment of Group D employees. Does the hon. Railway Minister want to say that non-filling up of these 20,000 Group D vacancies is responsible for the large number of accidents that had taken place? It is not proper to say that non-filling up of Group D vacancies was the only reason for these accidents. What is the number of reportable accidents and what is the number of non-reportable accidents that had taken place during the last year? How many major accidents had occurred in the Indian Railways vis-a-vis other international Railways during the last year? How many anti-collision device units and how much track circuiting you require to reduce the number of accidents?

Sir, for increasing the freight traffic to 550 million tonnes, would you not require more wagons and more coaches? How many wagons and coaches are going to be made available in this year?

In the case of freight tariff, from Vizag Port to Vizag Steel Plant, earlier you were charging 100-kilometre freight charge. Actually, from Vizag Port to Vizag Steel Plant, it is only 24 kilometres. Earlier, you were taking 100-kilometre freight charge. Now, it has come down to 75 kilometres. I would like to say that many factories are there. Why are you charging the steel sector? We want to boost the steel sector. So, you please reduce the freight charge. You can take the freight charge for 24 kilometres from Vizag Port to Vizag Steel Plant. If there is no increase in fare, then how are you going to tackle the issue of increasing the freight and passenger traffic?

I would like to know about the long pending projects in West Bengal. Now, I enter into my State, West Bengal and then to my constituency. After that, I conclude my speech. The long pending projects should be completed. There are projects like Namkhana-Eklakhi-Balurghat. There should be a time-bound direction.

So, the people will think that the projects will be completed in a certain manner. When will the Bankura-Damodar River railway be completed? I appeal to the Minister that in case of BDR, one line from Beliatare to Durgapur railway station should be surveyed immediately so that it will be the gateway of South India to North-East. The distance will come down by at least 200 kilometres. If anybody wants to go to Darjeeling or Assam, the distance will come down for him. If we join only 20

kilometres from Beliatore to Durgapur railway station in the Eastern Railway, then, the distance will come down by 200 kilometres. ...*(Interruptions)* Sir, I have some more points. It will be the shortest and a profitable route.

Further, I want to highlight another route, that is, the route from Raniganj to Bankura in the Eastern Railway. The route from Raniganj to Dullabhpur was done by the Mejia thermal power project to carry coal. If only 20 kilometres from Dullabhpur to Bankura is done, then the line from Raniganj to Bankura will be completed and it will cater to the needs of carrying coal to Haldia Petrochemicals. It will be the shortest route. It will become a traffic route also.

Durgapur is my constituency. It is known as the Rhur area of Eastern India. So, there is a necessity to introduce one fast passenger train from Durgapur to Howrah. Because of heavy rush in the morning trains coming from different stations, the aged passengers cannot board on the trains to go to Howrah. Due to rush in the trains, even the industrialists are complaining to me as to how they will travel from Durgapur to Howrah. The daily passengers and the students of the university are also demanding introduction of a new train from Durgapur to Howrah.

Sir, I welcome the Minister as he has already introduced a train from Asansol to Sealdah. I want to say that from Sealdah to Samastipur, there is only one train in the morning time. It is so busy that another train from Sealdah to Asansol should be introduced.

Pandaleshwar-Palasthali rail service has been suspended since September, 2002 due to some technical reasons, causing tremendous hardship to the commuters. So, I urge upon the Minister to restore this rail service immediately.

[Translation]

SHRI BAL KRISHNA CHAUHAN (Ghosi): Hon. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me a chance to speak on railway budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The speech of Shri Ashok Argal has been laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI BAL KRISHNA CHAUHAN: For the holistic development and progress of the country, railway is of much importance. It is like arteries and veins for the national life, as you have told in your speech also. Besides economic and business side of the rail it has got social aspect also, which was quoted before independence by highly reverend Baba Saheb Bhimrao

Ambedkar. Before independence being fed up with the Gandhian hypocrisy to eradicate untouchability Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar had said, "In comparison with Gandhiji Indian Railway has done much more to eradicate untouchability and discrimination and to encourage fraternity" Indian railway has been a system to establish social harmony regardless of any colour, caste, creed and religion. So the responsibility to safeguard and promote the system lies on the Government, the House and the people. So I urge upon the Government that there is a need to provide adequate fund in the budget to promote this system. I demand from hon. Minister of Finance and hon. Prime Minister to increase the budget allocation for that purpose.

This country is divided in many States. My own State i.e. Uttar Pradesh has produced many Prime Minister. Despite a heavy population of 15 crore and a vast geographical area, it has always been a neglected State. As only for name sake a new rail line has been laid at Katara, Ayodhya. Besides that a little bit of work is also done at one place. Even now we have been demanding a new railway line repeatedly from Doharighat to Gorakhpur, I would like to draw the kind attention of the hon. Minister on that subject.

Besides there is the issue of gauge conversion also along with this. No allocation has been made under this head especially for Eastern Uttar Pradesh. It is sheer coincidence that trains starting from Bihar pass through this area and take us to Delhi, but Eastern railway of Uttar Pradesh has always been a neglected. I would like to say something regarding gauge conversion in my constituency. Indore-Doharighat rail line is only a small stretch of 35 k.m. I had requested the hon. Minister of Railways during the last budget that 14 crores of rupees allocated for the renovation of railway tracks are being wasted. Only one rail bus is running on that railway track, which runs only for two to four days a month otherwise it remains closed. I requested him that the present Budget is useless unless the sanction for it is increased and the said line may be converted into broad gauge and connected with other Metropolitan cities of the country so as to facilitate the passengers. I also demand that this may be re-arranged and the Railways Renovation Programme may be suspended. Although it is the fund earmarked for S.R.S.F., it may be appropriated somewhere else and this line may be converted into broad gauge with the funds allocated for some other purpose. Similarly, there is a narrow gauge between Jaunpur and Audihaar, this may also be converted into broad gauge, and thus the area be developed. We have been demanding Bhatni-Allahabad railway line for the last 10 years. Please get this done too.

[Shri Bal Krishna Chauhan]

I would like to say one important thing with regard to my area, I extend my thanks to you for having increased the frequency Godan Express running between Gorakhpur and Mumbai. But for extending additional thanks, it is further requested to kindly give some more consideration towards my area. I would like to bring it to his cognizance that a new train has been proposed from Azamgarh to Delhi in the present Budget. Azamgarh is at the distance of eight hundred and fifty kilometers from Delhi. Prior to this on 2nd December 2002, under Rule 377, I had submitted that there are no basic facilities in Azamgarh for operation of trains. There are no facilities—viz., T.T.E. staff, Rail yard, cleanliness, water or even T.X.R., which rectifies mechanical defects etc. Mau Junction is located at a distance of mere 40 kilometres from Azamgarh. Kindly get the train started from Mau as all the basic facilities are available there. The local people are of the view that it is under the pressure of Rajya Sabha M.P. Shrimati Shabana Azmi that the train has been proposed to be started from Azamgarh. I do not mind if he is under some Pressure. I would extend my thanks to him and Shabana Azmi ji for starting the train from there. I am happy that if on the insistence of a Rajya Sabha M.P., he can start a train for a distance of eight hundred and fifty kilometers, then why he can not extend that train to the distance of mere 40 kilometers; I am talking of going 40 kilometers forward not to go backward. Mau junction is located at a distance of 40 kilometers from Azamgarh and it has all facilities. Mau junction is the centre of famous Banarasi Sarees. Foreigners visit this place. All lines from Gorakhpur, Balia, Siwan, Muzaffarpur, Varanasi etc. get linked here. So kindly get this train started from Mau. There is a big Rail yard there, a Loco shed for steam engines is lying vacant there and is under illegal encroachment. All facilities are available there. I hope that you would consider over this matter as rupees 1 crore 80 lakhs have been allocated for the purposes of washing pit and out of that an outlay of merely rupees 25 thousand has been approved. Rupees 25 thousand have been approved for each of the two years i.e. for the years 2003 and 2004. This, in itself is a special kind of outlay approved in the history of Railways. I think that the hon. Minister has decided that this train would be started from Mau. I have no objection to it. He may inaugurate the train from Azamgarh, if he wishes so. Former Minister of Railways Shri Jaffer Sharief had also inaugurated broad gauge line from Azamgarh. I have no objection if Azamgarh is popularised in this way. He may inaugurate the train with the consent of Shabana Azmi ji from Azamgarh itself, but kindly start it regularly and factually from Mau from the very next day. Alongwith this, some passenger trains are also running. There is no certain time of trains moving up and down from Mau. I have noticed that at 11.00 or 12.00 o'clock, there are only four-five passengers in the

train. We have repeatedly asked the officers to do away with this train and change the time. The train may be started only when the passengers need it and may be saved from suffering losses. Similarly I had also made requests with regard to construction of Terminal. The hon. Minister had made allocations in the Budget for the fourth washing pit in Varanasi, but 135 trains are daily moving up and down from this junction. And on the other hand, we have Mau junction at a distance of 90 kms from Varanasi, having vast area, Ten years back rupees eight crore were approved for washing pit. I wish that Mau may be developed into a terminal in order to lessen the burden on Gorakhpur and Varanasi, Moreover as regards the unreserved bogies in the trains, I submit that Uttaranchal is a very backward area. Poor people of the State travel all along the country for earning their livelihood, therefore the number of unreserved bogies may kindly be increased as there are only two unreserved bogies in the trains which are always over-crowded, leaving half of the people unable to board the train. With these words, I extend my thanks to you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

*SHRI ASHOK ARGAL (Muraina): Sir, I welcome the railway Budget for the year 2003-2004 presented by hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar ji as this Budget has facilitated persons of all States in the country, may they be poor or rich, Journalists or even sick persons. I also welcome 50 new trains proposed to be introduced in the country.

I also extend my thanks to the hon. Minister of Railways on behalf of the people of Muraina that he has announced stoppage of two superfast trains—G.T. Express and Mangla Express at Muraina Railway station in my constituency. I demand for the stoppage of Mahakaushal and Utkal Express trains at Banmore Railway station under the Central Railways.

I have drawn the attention of the hon. Minister towards opening of computerized Reservation counters in each district of the country, but there is a need for opening a reservation counter in district Shyampur Kalan of my constituency.

I would like to draw this attention towards gauge conversion of Gwalior-Shyampur Kalan narrow gauge line which would directly connect Gwalior with Sawai Madhopur.

I request that only one track is left for gauge conversion in Jhansi Division under the gauge conversion policy of the Government, this may kindly be completed.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

With these words, I again extend my thanks to the hon. Minister of Railways.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Dr. Ramchandra Dome shall lay his speech on the Table.

[English]

*DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME (Birbhum): Sir, please allow me to lay the text of my speech on Railway Budget 2003-2004 on the Table of the House. The text of my speech is as under:-

1. That this year's railway Budget is purely directionless, developmentless, populist and election budget.
2. Eastern and North East States are deprived and specially West Bengal has got no justice.
3. No due attention has been given on safety and security of railway services.
4. No direction for job creation and positive recruitment drive in the Budget.
5. Harassment and torture on Railway Hawkers to be stopped immediately at Howrah station.

The following proposals to improve Railway service to be taken up for implementation immediately by the Railway Ministry:

- (a) To take appropriate steps to restore the passenger train services on Pandakeswar-Palashthali section of Eastern Railway.
- (b) To allocated adequate funds for implementation of KHANA-SAINTHIA doubling project. Electrification of this route to be taken up.
- (c) Doubling with Electrification of ANDAL to SAINTHIA section of Eastern Railway.
- (d) To connect SIURI station with Bolpur via Sainthia Junction.
- (e) Modernisation of SIURI station along with provisions of terminal facility to be made.
- (f) To introduce one pair of fast passenger on, express train from Howrah to SIURI daily.
- (g) Need to introduce one pair of DMU trains from ASANSOL to SAINTHIA daily.

- (h) Need to introduce one pair of DMU trains from BURDWAN to BOGPUR.
- (i) Need to restore the Upper India Express from Sealdah to Delhi via Shahibgaunje Loop.
- (j) Need to introduce a Jana-Shatabdi Express from Howrah to New Jalpaiguri via Bolpur.
- (k) Need to convert the N.G. to B.G. line of Ahammadpur to Katwa section of Eastern Railway.
- (l) Need to construct a new commercial Railway line from Mallarpur to Panchami on Eastern Railway.
- (m) Need to provide adequate fund for speedy implementation of the ongoing project from Dumka to Rampurhat via Mandarhill.
- (n) Need to construct a Railway bridge at Murarai Station on Eastern Railway.
- (o) Need to construct flyover bridges over railway lines at following locations:
 - (i) Near SIURI station at SIURI-Bolpur Roadways crossing.
 - (ii) Near SIURI station at Abdarpur on Panagarh Moregram State Highway crossing.
 - (iii) Near Murarai and Nalhati Station.
 - (iv) Near Sainthia Station on Sainthia. Labpur Roadways crossing.
- (p) Need to improve the drinking water, toilet and other passenger amenities at all stations in the Sahibgaunge Loop and Andhal-Sainthia section of Eastern Railway.
- (q) Need to provide stoppage of all express and superfast trains at Nalhati Junction, Eastern Railway.
- (r) Need to introduce one pair of fast passenger trains from Asansol to Azimgaunge on Eastern Railway.
- (s) Need to introduce one pair of DMU's from Nalhati Junction to Azimgaunge Station on Eastern Railway.
- (t) Need to construct a new terminal at Shalimar on Padmapukur very soon.
- (u) Need to save the Wagon-industries of West Bengal.

I urge upon the Railway Minister to take appropriate measures to implement the above project and proposals immediately.

[Translation]

SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (Shajapur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I whole heartedly support the railway budget for the year 2003-2004 as presented by hon. Minister of Railways and I wish to submit that this Budget is a balanced Budget with regard to the development of Railways as also the entire country. Hon. Minister has made an endeavour for welfare of the people and development of the country. Due to time constraint I would like to say something with regard to the problems of my area first. Hon. Minister of Railways had granted approval for conducting survey for laying of new railway line from Ujjain to Ramganj Mandi. Survey has been conducted and the Survey report is under the consideration of the Government. There was a meter gauge railway line between Ujjain and Agar Malwa before independence but this was removed during 'Emergency period' since then, we have been demanding for laying a new railway line in vain. After that not once but a number of times, we have been assured by various Governments and Ministry of Railways about laying railway track there but no action has been taken till date. Survey has already been conducted and is favourable. I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that there is a need to construct railway line from Ujjain to Ramganj Mandi. New railway line from Ramganj Mandi to Bhopal has been approved and the survey work has been started. The length of this stretch has been lessened by 25-26 kilometers and thus it would involve less cost prices. I, therefore, request that the said railway line may be granted approval as our hon. Minister has already stated during the survey itself that he would try to grant approval to it. There is single line between Ujjain, Dewas and Indore. Railway engine has to be changed every time in Ujjain while going to Indore, reversal is also done which sometimes takes half to one hour time. Hence there is need of doubling with electrification of Ujjain-Indore railway line. I have made him aware earlier also that this matter is under the consideration of the Ministry. I would again request the hon. Minister to accord approval to the demand of electrification and doubling of new railway line between Ujjain-Dewas-Indore. There is no train between Kota and Ratlam from 3.00 O'clock in the morning till 11-12.00 O'clock in the noon. Passengers are facing lot of problems due to this. A proposal in this regard is also under the consideration of the Department. I, therefore, wish that a train should be started between Kota and Ratlam. There is also a need to start train between Bhopal and Ratlam. And a computerised booking and reservation counter is also required at Shajapur and Shujalpur stations. The Government and Ministry of Railways have chalked out a policy that computerised booking counters would be

opened at district headquarters. Shajapur is a district headquarter and a large number of Passengers travel from or through Shujalpur and therefore computerised reservation counter is required at both the stations. Besides, there is also a need to start new trains on Indore, Dewas, Maksi and Gwalior routes. Presently, only two trains are running on this route. One is Intercity from Indore to Gwalior which runs thrice a week. Second is Indore-Dehradun and Ujjain-Dehradun. There are the two trains running there. Due to this passengers are facing a lot of problems. It would be better if both the trains-Ujjain Dehradun and Indore-Dehradun running all the seven days on this route may be merged and started from Indore for all the seven days. There is also a need to increase the speed of intercity train as some of the bus drivers had filed a writ in the Gwalior High Court. I do not want to mention but the court has fixed time table. The court had directed the Ministry of Railways about the timings of departure of the train. It has a stoppage of 45 minutes each at Maksi and Guna. We did correspondence and its route was also diverted. Timetable was also improved but, the time given is so much that a lot of time is wasted. This can still be improved and the train can atleast start in time and reach two hours earlier. Moreover, time can be saved by speeding up the train.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, similarly, there is train for Jaipur, Chennai, Indore and Nagpur, which goes to Berchha. Berchha feeds district headquarter. It is a distance of 14 kilometers from Shajapur district headquarter. It is at a distance of 14 kilometers from Shajapur district headquarter. Passengers face a lot of problems for travelling purposes from these stations. Large number of people travel daily from here. Therefore there should be stoppage of both the trains at these stations. Jaipur-Durg Express is also required to be given a stoppage at Shujalpur. These matters are already under the consideration of the department. There is a need to make stoppage of Indore-Kochhi and Indore-Howrah Express at Maksi and Shujalpur. I request the hon. Minister as a fair is going to be organised in my area, season of marriages is also going on, so it would be really great of him if he accedes to our demand.

Jammu-Tawi superfast train starts from Mumbai for Jammu-Tawi. The numbers of this train are 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474 and 2476. While travelling in these trains, I found that they are the most dirty trains. Even the bed-rolls are in a bad shape. I have written twice or thrice, but no improvement has been made in this train. I would make a special request to the hon. Minister that cleanliness arrangements for the said train may kindly be

made as also clean bed-rolls may also be provided. Kalisind and Kalapipal falls in the Ujjain and Bhopal section. There is always heavy rush of passengers on both the stations. The stations have double line, four lines have been laid at the station—two main lines and two loop lines. There is no foot-overbridge for crossing these railway line and to go to other platforms, a number of accidents have taken place due to this. I demand that foot overbridge may be constructed at both the stations at the earliest.

I support the Railway Budget. He is the first hon. Minister of Railways who has take care of the entire country, otherwise preceding Railway Ministers had taken care of their own region only. I congratulate the hon. Minister for this.

[*Translation*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Bikram Keshari Deo to lay his speech on the Table.

[*English*]

*SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget 2003-2004 which was introduced in the House. The Minister has tried his best and has given us a balanced budget and has made the political promises of yesteryears a reality, like the creation of new zone and divisions which were languishing since long and creating a bad regional feeling among its constituents and the people of those zones in general. Also it was creating a bad name for the Railway Ministry and the NDA Government in general. So, the progressive and dynamic Minister has least been able to stem the rot and has projected the Railway Budget is very balanced manner in tune with the present financial scenario and the NDA Government goal to reach a growth rate of 8% GDP as announced by our beloved Prime Minister. As it is known that Indian Railways Network is the largest railway network under a single management and has a route length of 62,759.34 Kms. and a operating fleet of 4,86532 wagons in term of 4 wheelers, 41,513 caching vehicle and 7,517 locomotive nearly 14000 passenger trains are running and nearly 12.9 million passengers were booked daily and nearly 500 million tonnes of freight traffic has been carried by our Railways, so this daunting task of efficient management has been tried to streamlined by our Hon. Minister Nitishji. For this act of his I commend him from the core of my heart. The freight services has been designed to see that material handling and warfage and other incidental charges do not hurt the industrialist

the pervious cumber some structures have been simplified I would not like to go into details because there is already a vivid description of the same in the Budget Speech of the Railway Minister. The various freight concessions have yielded additional revenue for the Railways like brining down the rate of traffic booked for distance upto 50 Kms and thereon. He has done away with the surcharge which an excessive burden to railuser.

Besides he has not increased the passengers fare for this financial year and given a lost of concessions to the commuters of various classes and has declared to make train travel a good mode of travel, it is a known fact that rail travel is one of the most environmental friendly mode of transport and its unsustainable development will only make the Railways better.

Sir, in the same vein, I would like to thank the Railway Minister for concretizing the formation of the East Coast Zone Railways and making it fully functional from this year onwards it has pleased the people of Orissa to see a different head of expenditure in the Budget estimates and explanatory memorandum. The message has now gone right to the people of Orissa who were previously just neglected by the previous Governments with false political promises.

The new trains introduced in the year 2003-04 will greatly help the economic of Orissa to its magnificent beaches and temples and its eco. tourism. All the six new trains would help Orissa to develop in all aspects. But at the same time, I would point at some grey areas which require the attention of the Railways and if they are developed and connected the vast mineral resources could be exploited, like developing the Langigarh to Junagarh Railway line which requires early completion, so the allocations should be enhanced. And further survey be made to connect it with Ambaguda on the KK line which connects the famous Bailadila mines with the port of Visakapatnam.

Also I would thank the Railway Minister for improvement of all my stations in the Kalahandi Parliamentary constituency and doubling of line from Langigarh to Titlagarh. So, further request that also line from Titlagarh to Raipur should be doubled.

I request that the frequency of the Samata Express should be made daily as it is the only train from the KBK region of Orissa. Also the KBK regions all go to place like Delhi and North India for work and this is the only train. So, with these few words, I support the Budget. Also for the computer facilities I thank the Minister and also open a booking counter at Bhawnipatnam District Headquarters.

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur): Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I cannot admire the Railway Budget, but I admire that how cleverly the hon. Minister has presented the Railway Budget. It has been made with a sharp wit. I would have been definitely praiseworthy, had the Railway Budget given some facilities to the poor people, farmers and common Passengers of the country. Then certainly I would have also admired the railway budget. I would like to congratulate hon. Minister that he has started the train from Kanpur to Delhi which I had been demanding since last three years. He has also given approval to the widening of Tat will flyover in Kanpur for which I had been demanding for the last three years. Foundation stone is to be laid according to the convenience of hon. Minister. I praise his efforts, his wit, but not the Railway Budget.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I had made such a demand which could save crores of rupees in Kanpur city. There is a stretch of 6 kilometers in Kanpur city, i.e. single track on Delhi to Howrah route between Chandani and Kanpur central. All would be surprised to find that there is single track between Delhi and Howrah which is from Chandani to Kanpur central. If the track from Howrah is diverted via old Kanpur railway station, then the said single track would itself discontinue. Instead, work of doubling the track is going to be started, which is of no use. Almost Rupees 50 crore are likely to be incurred on doubling of this track which would also create problems for people as there is no space for making double track there. If the old Kanpur railway station is developed there would be double track between Delhi-Howrah and it would give maximum benefit to the passengers of Kanpur and the requirement of 5 flyovers, which is there due to this single track, would automatically wipe out. Funds to be used for developing the old Kanpur Railway station can be accrued from setting the land where the present single-track exists.

Similarly if the railway line from Mandra to Palki is connected, then the demand of latest 14 flyovers for Kanpur city would automatically be wiped out. A line from Kanpur to Farrukhabad was laid 70-80 years back. But at that time there was less traffic in Kanpur city. There was no question of traffic in the area where line was laid, but today it has become an area of high population. If this track is connected from Mandra to Palki and then diverted to Kanpur central, then the need for 13 flyovers would be done away with. I hope when two of our demands have been approved then this third and fourth would also be fulfilled.

Hon. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would conclude my speech with this last point. I had demanded the hon. Minister that when the personnel of Military and Para-military forces adorned with President's medal are given facility of free journey by railways then why this facility is not given to those common people adorned with 'Shaurya Chakra'. I had also given representation in this regard to hon. Minister. The Military personnel are given cash for their bravery deeds but a common man showing bravery and awarded with Shaurya Chakra, are not giving any concessions even in railway journey. It seems very strange. I demand that atleast AC-II class facility should be provided to those persons who have been awarded with Shaurya Chakra. Similarly 'Paramveer Chakra', 'Mahaveer Chakra' awards should also be given the facilities of Shatabadi and Rajdhani Express trains.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the time of discussion on Demands for Grants, I had announced that the railway passes are issued to the Soldiers adorned with Paramveer Chakra, Mahaveer Chakra and Veer Chakra by the railways but these passes are not valid in Shatabdi and Rajdhani Express trains. I had made this announcement at that time only.

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL: Sir, my demand is that announcement should be made for giving pass facilities to common people also who have been adorned with Shaurya Chakra in the present Budget itself. At least, facility of travelling by II A.C. should be given to them.

With these words, I concluded my speech.

[English]

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram): Hon. Chairman Sir, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to place on record that Tamil Nadu Government has committed for Rs. 703.34 crore for three important railway projects, namely, Suburban Gauge Conversion; Mass Rapid Transit system: Chennai, Phase II; and Cuddalore-Salem project. There is no corresponding outlay from the Ministry of Railways to ensure early completion of these projects.

Sir, 41 over-bridges projects have been sanctioned for Tamil Nadu, the total cost for which is Rs. 440 crore, but the budget allotment is Rs. 19.28 crore. It is under the cost sharing system. This was expected to be completed during March 2002. It is painful to note that with this meagre amount, it is impossible to complete the projects.

[Translation]

MR . CHAIRMAN: Shri A.K.S. Vijayan will lay his speech on rail budget on Table.

[English]

DR. V. SAROJA: Sir, in addition, there are 12 RUBs sanctioned under Gauge Conversion Projects between Chennai Beach and Tambaram. These are likely to be completed by March, 2005, but there is no budget allotment.

Further, 11 ROB's are planned on deposit work basis in Tamil Nadu Government and 20 ROB's by the National Highways Authority of India. I would request the hon. Minister to take into consideration the demands of the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Sir, to place it on record again, it is evident that Tamil Nadu has been totally neglected in this Railway Budget. The total outlay sanctioned for the gauge conversion project will be Rs. 1,962 crore and the missing links for gauge conversion requires about Rs. 890 crore. Sir, I would urge upon the Government and also the Railway Minister to, at least, allocate Rs. 1,000 crore this year for the early completion of these projects.

Sir, coming to the important project of uni-gauge, that is, Villupuram to Thanjavur mainline which passes through the heartland of Tamil Nadu, and connects important cities like Cuddalore, Manamadurai and Kumbakonam and which have tremendous potential for freight traffic. Now, it is totally cut off. It used to start from Tambaram.

The total project cost will be Rs. 223 crore, but the allotment is Rs. 5.4 crore. It is painful to note that though the hon. Minister of Railways inaugurated the Salem-Cuddalore new railway line during 1999, till now, the total allotment is less than Rs. 50 crore. This year, the allotment is only Rs. 15 crore. May I request the hon. Minister of Railways to allocate, at least, Rs. 100 crore this year so that the project could be completed at the earliest possible.

The other project, which runs through my constituency, is about the gauge conversion from Cuddalore to Salem. The hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways is well aware that people from Salem, Attur, Thalaivasal, and up to Villupuram have no train facility, at least, for seven or eight years. I will request the hon. Minister of Railways and also the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways to look into this problem.

People of these concerned areas have gone on strike, and I gave them an assurance that I would raise it in the Parliament and get the budget allotment. Kindly take note of this; let this not be taken in a lighter vein.

Palghat Division is very large with the jurisdiction stating from Jolarpettai in Tamil Nadu to Mangalore in Karnataka. Therefore, setting up of a new division at Salem is a long pending demand of the people of the adjacent, at least, seven or eight States. Setting up a new division at Salem is going to be a viable project also. The hon. Minister may look into this. When the hon. Minister replies to the debate, the people living in the northern part of Tamil Nadu expect that a new Salem Division will be created this year. While many States benefited from Railways' decentralisation policy, Tamil Nadu was given a stepmotherly treatment.

Though I have pointed out about the budget allotment and the stepmotherly treatment, of course, there are many plus points in the Budget. I am very happy that the freight charges and also the passenger ticket charge have not been increased. But how do you meet the demands of this country without increasing, at least, one rupee per ticket in the higher-class category? You should have increased it so that you could have bridged the gap between the lower-class and higher-class tickets. You should have increased the fare by at least one rupee per ticket in the higher-class. This would not cause much problem, provided the Railways is taking care of the basic amenities and other things.

As far as drinking water is concerned, there is already a lot of debate that is going on about the impurities and other pesticides in the water content. The Ministry of Railways definitely should have their own protected drinking water policy. You have to spend more money, otherwise, you have to divert more money for the medical facilities because it is a health hazard.

Finally, Sir, track circuiting is a very important aspect for which the hon. Minister has allocated Rs. 425 crore in the Budget. As far as the safety measures are concerned, recently, I visited Villupuram Station where I had a discussion with the railway officials. They have insisted that more budget allocation should be made for continuous track circuiting by which you will be able to reduce the number of accidents.

I welcome the hon. Minister for extending the concessions for the patients, especially the cancer, thalassaemia major, heart and kidney patients. This concession should not only be given to the patients, but also to their attendants so that the movement of the patients is not a problem.

[Dr. V. Saroja]

20.00 hrs.

The bio-diesel project is a welcome step. I would request the hon. Minister to have consultations with the State Governments. Wherever Government land is in plenty, along the National Highways and railway lines, we should make use of it for bio-diesel projects. We in Tamil Nadu have found out some other plan which is useful for the bio-diesel project. I would request the hon. Minister to have consultations with the State Governments on the possibility and feasibility of setting up bio-diesel projects.

Regarding sportsmen, there are employees of Indian Railways who are doing wonders in this field. However, the facilities made available to these sports persons in the Railways are very minimal. The encouragement extended to the sportsmen is very less. A critical analysis of the hidden talents of not only the railway employees but also their wards has to be made so that we can develop those talents and send those people into the international sports arena.

Last but not least, the Government should consider providing education and job opportunities to the wards of Class III and Class IV Railway employees. We tend to have more educational institutions and job-oriented courses for Ex-Servicemen. I would request the hon. Minister to consider this request so that the wards of Class III and Class IV employees of the Indian Railways can be taken care of.

*The benefits of 'Project Unigauge' have been denied to Tamil Nadu. While the remnants of MG lines in Karala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh have already been sanctioned for gauge conversion and work has also started large lengths of Railway lines in Tamil Nadu is still MG and gauge conversion has not yet been sanctioned.

2. As on 31.03.2001, the MG kilometres on all Indian Railways is 14,987 kms. and BG is 44,776 kms. The percentage of MG is only 25% on all Indian Railways basis whereas it is 51 percent in Tamil Nadu.

3. A very vital link which is yet to be sanctioned for gauge conversion is the COIMBATORE-POLLACHI, PALGHAT-POLLACHI, POLLACHI-DINDIGUL-MADURAI MG Section comprising of 286.6 kms. This is estimated to cost Rs. 328.79 crores.

4. While work on the TIRUPATI-KATPADI MG line of South Central Railway is progressing rapidly there is

hardly any input on the Katpadi-Villupuram Section which passes through Tiruvannamalai an important pilgrim centre visited by millions of devotees from India and abroad.

5. Likewise the important link from Thanjavur to pilgrim centres like Nagore and Velankanni which are visited by people of all faiths from India and abroad are cut off from the main stream of traffic. This region is the rice bowl of Tamil Nadu and foodgrain movement has been badly hit. The project (TIRUCHCHIRAPPALLI-NAGORE-KARAIKAL & NAGAPATTINAM-VAILANKANNI) was sanctioned at a total cost of Rs. 196.23 crores and Rs. 80.59 crores have been spent so far. Only Rs. 13 crores have been provided in this year's budget. It is ironical that this line was originally BG! Early completion of this route will not only go towards national integration by facilitating the movement of devotees to these all faith holy shrine but earn considerable revenue for the Railways both from passenger as well as freight traffic.

6. The other vital links which have been cut off and for which there is no sanction for gauge conversion are Manamadurai-Virudhunagar, Mayladuturai-Tiruthurai-pundi-Karaikudi, Tiruthurai-pundi-Agasthiampalli and Madurai-Bodinayakanur.

7. With the Virudhunagar-Rajapalayam section now closed to traffic, the East West link from Quilon to Villupuram via Tiruvarur and Myladuturai has been cut off. The north-south link from Coimbatore towards Quilon has also been cut off. Early completion of the Virudhunagar-Tenkasi-Tirunelveli-Tiruchendur lines gauge conversion which was sanctioned in 1997-1998 at a cost of Rs. 327.61 crores will partly restore these links.

8. The work on the Salem-Viriddachalam-Cuddalore gauge conversion project is also proceeding at a snails pace. As against Rs. 198.68 crores required for this project only Rs. 18.70 crores have been spent so far and this year's allocation is only Rs. 15 crores. While the line from Vriddhachalam to Vadalur will be converted, unless the other link from Salem to Cuddalore is also converted this partial gauge conversion will further cut off Cuddalore is also converted this partial gauge conversion will further cut off Cuddalore form Salem.

9. The Ports in Tamil Nadu are developing rapidly and there are plans to run ferry services from Colombo to Tuticorin. Export of hosiery from Coimbatore area via Tuticorin are badly hit as the Railways are not able to provide on time deliveries in goods trains due to the line capacity constraints on Dindigul-Madurai Section. Besides this lucrative freight traffic for the railways there is tremendous demand for running additional mail/express

trains from Chennai to Kanyakumari and Bangalore to Chennai and Bangalore towards Kanyakumari. It is therefore imperative that the Dindigul-Madurai GB line is immediately doubled and the gauge conversion from conversion from Dindigul to Madurai also sanctioned.

10. Hon'ble Prime Minister has announced "Railway Vikas Yojna". The Golden Quadrilateral and diagonals are to be strengthened. It is imperative that the Pattabiram-Trivellore-Arakkonam line is quadrupled so that both faster movement of freight and passenger traffic are facilitated.

11. The Salem-Karur new line was sanctioned in the year 1996-97 at a cost of Rs. 229.88 crores. So far Rs. 43.64 crores have been spent and work has not progressed further for want of funds. This year's allotment is only Rs. 15 crores. Early completion of this link will not only shorten the distance from north to south but also relieve the burden on Salem-Drode line and more trains can be run from Bangalore towards Madurai, Kanyakumari and Tuticorin thereby benefiting the industries situated in the Hosur area as well the travellers going further towards Kanyakumari side.

12. At present there is only a singly BG line from Tambaram to Villupuram via Chengalpattu. There is a single MG line from Villupuram via Chengalpattu. When the sanctioned project of Tambaram to Chengalpattu is completed the Chengalpattu-Villupuram MG line will become an isolated stretch as Villupuram-Pondicherry and Villupuram-Thanjavur and Villupuram-Katpadi lines are all sanctioned for gauge conversion.

13. The Railways seem to have totally overlooked the situation when BG trains from 4 different directions, viz. Katpadi, Pondicherry, Thanjavur and the existing Tiruchchirappalli chord line will converge at Villupuram and have to negotiate the single BG line from Villupuram to Chengalpattu.

14. Likewise, once gauge conversion of Tambaram-Chengalpattu is completed 3 lines including the BG line from Arakkonam will join at Chengalpattu. It is surprising that the Railways have not foreseen the tremendous capacity constraints which will be placed on the single BG line from Chengalpattu to Villupuram. It is understood that the Chengalpattu-Villupuram MG line will be abandoned. This is a tremendous national loss instead if the MG line from Chengalpattu to Villupuram is converted to BG and electrified there will be a through double line electrified section from Chennai up to Villupuram. Once the sanctioned gauge conversion projects are completed, Tamil Nadu will have in effect, a double line right from

Villupuram to Tirunelveli as there will be one BG line from Villupuram to Tirunelveli via Viruddhachalam, Tiruchchirappalli, Dindigul, Madurai and Virudhunagar and another BG line from Villupuram via Cuddalore, Myladuturai, Thanjavur, Tiruchchirappalli, Manamadurai, Virudhunagar, Tenkasi, which will greatly facilitate movement of both passenger and freight traffic.

15. Similarly while the streams of traffic from Myladuturai and Tiruvarur will go to Thanjavur there is only one BG line from Thanjavur to Tiruchchirappalli from where traffic will move in 4 different directions, i.e. Vriddachalam, Karur, Dindigul and Manamadurai. Here also railways have failed to anticipate the tremendous traffic congestion which will occur on the existing Thanjavur-Tiruchchirappalli single BG line and are planning to abandon the existing Thanjavur-Tiruchchirappalli MG line. It is therefore imperative that the existing Tiruchchirappalli-Thanjavur MG line is also converted to BG well in time.

16. Like wise the line from Thanjavur to Kumbakonam should be converted to BG well before the Maha Maham (Kumbh Mela) at Kumbakonam in January, 2004.

17. While the Ministry of Railways is prepared to rescue Konkan Railway Corporation by way of repaying the debts amounting to 3,000 crores of which 266 crores were paid in this year and 430 crores in the next year, the much smaller outlays required for completing the ongoing works in railway developmental works in Tamil Nadu are being denied.

18. Hon'ble MPs of Tamil Nadu cutting across party lines demanded that their voice should be heard in the Parliament and the Ministry of Railways made alive to the legitimate aspirations of the Tamil people.

*SHRI A.K.S VIJAYAN (Nagappattinam): I welcome this year's Railway Budget from the commuters' point of view for their is no fare hike. At the same time, I cannot hide my disappointment for not making adequate allocation for the ongoing projects in the Southern Railways region, especially Tamil Nadu and more particularly in my constituency. There is virtually no augmentation of Railway services in our Thanjavur-Nagappattinam-Trichirappalli and Nagapathinam-Velankannai and Nagappattinam-Karaikal sections. These sections are there from the days of Britishers but are ignored continuously all these years.

We have been talking of gauge conversion for the past one decade. But what happened to Thanjavur-Thirmonar-Nagore line some decade ago had put the

*Speech was laid on the Table.

[Shri A.K.S. Vijayan]
clock back in the area. Commercial and industrial activities in that port town Nagappattinam comes to a standstill when the broad gauge line there was converted to metre gauge line some years ago. For the past one decade we have been talking about making all the Railway lines in the country to be broad gauge lines. In 1993, when the erstwhile Railway Minister visited Nagore, he gave a solemn promise that Nagore-Trichi line would be converted to a broad gauge line. But it has not been done as yet. Trichi-Thanjavur gauge conversion come almost in a slowest pace. But Thanjavur-Nagore gauge conversion is still to be completed. The General Manager, Southern Railway gave an assurance in September 2002 that this gauge conversion would be completed by March 2003 at least between Thanjavur and Thiruvaroor. I am sorry to say that it is another promise gone haywire.

To complete the gauge conversion in this section the amount earmarked in this year's Budget is very meagre. Just Rs. 12 crores have been allotted whereas the project would entail a further Rs. 50 crores of expense for its completion. This is route which attract pilgrim from all over the country round the year. But still no attention is paid by the Southern Railway and the Indian Railways. I urge upon the Union Government to look into this.

In Vedaranyam Central region, quality salt is available in plenty. For want of broad gauge line, the salt produced here could not be taken in time to different parts of the country. Our able Railway Minister can see for himself the hindrance, it would be coming to halt the commercial and industrial activities could be carried out in this backward area. I also urge upon the Railways to construct cold storage godowns in the coastal railway stations to preserve fish and sea products.

Linking of Nagore-Karaikal-Mayiladuthurai via Tranguibar (Tharangampadi) is a crying need to be attended to by the Railways. It would be mutually benefiting both the Railways and the public who can thrive with a fillip to their economic activities.

Sir, when you compare the new lines laid in many States after the independence of the country, Tamil Nadu did not get a better deal all these years. Most of the lines in Tamil Nadu were laid when the Britishers were ruling the country. We are proud Indians, when are you going to make us happy Indians?

At a time when fossile fuels are becoming a depleted commodity, Railways must come forward to electrify most of the operational routes. In far off areas as is done between Thiruvaroor and Vedaranyam more rail cars must

be run. This may attract the passengers to take to the Railways. This will help conserve the petro-product too. I request the Railway Minister to run more regular rail cars between Nagore-Nagappattinam-Thanjavur. You may also take up laying of a pilgrim railway route between Nagappattinam and Velankabnni which will difinitely be a money-spinner to the Railways. I fervently hope the prudent Railway Minister will consider this long-pending demand.

[*Translation*]

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA (Damoh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me opportunity to speak. At the outset I would like to congratulate hon'ble Railway Minister and extend my whole hearted support for this budget. The budget can be described as balanced, miraculous and practical. Balance has been maintained among all parts of the country. In addition to Golden Quadrilateral route-all parts of India including Jammu-Kashmir and North-Eastern States have been covered. Railways is a symbol of national unity. It has correctly depicted its meaning. I would like to thank him for his farsightedness as he has introduced not only new trains but the travel has been made cheaper, too, thereby attracting more passengers. You may be aware railways has become more crowded even then more passengers are opting for railways. It has adversely affected the condition of bus owners in my area. Factories are transporting their goods through railways. It has increased the revenue of railways. I would like to honour hon'ble Railway Minister by stating this budget as a miraculous budget.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have no words to commend hon'ble Railway Minister as earlier my area had only 3 trains which now has increased to 16. My area falls in Bundelkhand region. Apart from it, Lalitpur-Singrauli region is backward. New dimension for development of this region has been opened by providing adequate funds for Khajuraho to Panna, Panna to Satna, Satna to Rewa and Rewa to Singrauli. I would like to remind Shri Nitish Kumar Ji that he has ordered Survey work between Jabalpur Damoh-Panna. If that is linked then a distance of 300 km would be saved on Jabalpur-Singrauli via Katni route. It will prove to be a short cut. Tourism will also be promoted if Khajuraho and Jabalpur are linked. Bheraghat and Dhunandhar are tourist spots in Jabalpur and so are Khajuraho and Chitrakut which are proposed to be linked to this route. Therefore, I request him to sanction this work. Hon'ble Minister may be aware that Survey Work has been completed.

About this budget, I would like to say that hon'ble Minister has made efforts for proper development of

Madhya Pradesh. There was narrow gauge between Jabalpur and Gaundia. The gauge conversion work has been taken up by the hon'ble Minister, out of which half work has been finished and rest will be completed too. There are so many works to narrate. I would like to submit that major portion of railways land is lying vacant. There is an old loco shed in my area. There people have encroached on 2-3 hundred acres. Hon'ble Minister had said that he would secure and develop such lands. As per that I would like to request you to secure that area and open some factory there. For how many works should I thank him. He opened a new railway zone in Jabalpur. This step has increased to such an extent the possibilities of development in Jabalpur, which was beyond everyone's imagination. After the formation of a zone there, if the loco shed area is developed, it will give a boost to job creation which will be further enhanced if a railway accessories factory is opened there. In this way he will be able to provide jobs to the people through railways as promised and will also lead to development of the area.

Sir, hon'ble Minister has introduced a number of new trains in my area. In the current budget another train has been provided for which I am thankful to him. The new train runs between Jabalpur and Kota. There is a shuttle service between Damoh and Kota. If it is extended till Ajmer Sharif and Pushkar since the two places of Muslim and Hindu pilgrimage respectively are located together and people in large numbers go to the two places. If the Kota-Damoh shuttle is extended till Ajmer and Pushkar, then it will be a great achievement for the local people.

Sir, I would now like to submit about the future requirements of my area. Kshipra Express between Indore and Howrah runs thrice a week. It will be better if it is made a daily train, as its demand is very high. Recently when hon'ble Minister was in Jabalpur, people had made demand for it. Similarly, Bina-Katni train also needs to be extended till Jabalpur. I thank him for introducing Bhopal-Howrah weekly train. The entire Bundelkhand will benefit, if the train is run three times a week. The stoppage of Kamayani Express at Badhakpur was announced by the hon'ble Minister during his visit. I have full faith that he will keep his word.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Sagoni station is a centre of 100 villages and the rural people often visit there. If Vindhyachal express is given a stoppage there, the local people will benefit, they will have more convenience and the revenues of railways will also rise.

Similarly, the people of Sikh community and other go to Vaishno Devi by Mahakaushal express. Demand

has been made to extend the train till Jammu. Even agitation's have been launched for that. Since there is high public demand for it. Therefore, I request that Mahakaushal express be extended till Jammu.

Sir, people have a new demand that after the creation of new State Chhattisgarh, a direct rail service between Delhi and its capital Raipur via Bina-Katni should be introduced.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, with these words I support the budget and resume my seat.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Mavelikara): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would not like to discuss rail budget in detail. I would like to submit about the injustice done to Kerala. When we, the MPs from Kerala had met hon'ble Minister in his chamber he had asked about our priorities in regard to railway in Kerala, we had accorded top priority to the rail lines. Hon'ble Minister had assured us for the same.

Sir, the doubling work between Kayamkulam and Thiruvananthapuram has been completed. Work between Mangalore to Shornur is going on but this work should be done from Ernakulam to Kayamkulam via Alleppey to Kottayam. Budget allocation for doubling of this 15 km long stretch was made and he had promised that doubling work will be undertaken both in Kayamkulam-Mavelikara and Kayamkulam-Cheppard sections. But only Rs. 5 crore has been provided for the two tasks. That is not going to be adequate.

Sir, hon'ble Minister has given us only one new train while 540 new trains have been announced all over the country. The budget does not mention about the extension of any route in Kerala. Kerala has also been ignored in the matter of gauge conversion. The process of electrification will also streamline the running of trains in Kerala. Electrification work is going on upto Cochin. My submission is that electrification work between Cochin and Trivandrum is not going on as speedily as it should have. Actually the work is going on very slowly and I request to expedite it.

Sir, one of our long standing complaint has been that of being denied a zone. It has still not being given to us. We need a zone. At present my region is under Chennai zone. The headquarters of Southern Railways is Chennai. The officials are concerned with the development of only Chennai and surrounding areas and ignore my region. All the MPs of Kerala request that this matter be attended to and development scheme for our area should also be formulated. On priority basis. I also accuse the

[Shri Ramesh Chennithala]

railways for not utilising the funds it receives from the Government for development works and so our development plans lag behind. I request that hon'ble Minister to look into this matter and be concerned about it. I also accuse it of not utilising the money given to it. What are the reasons? It needs to be investigated. A new railway line between Kottayam to Arimeli has been mentioned for so many years. When Shri Paswan was the Rail Minister he had sanctioned funds for it in the Budget. Every year we demand that more allocation needs to be made for this. But we go heedless. I think even in this budget only Rs. 10 lakh has been provided for this purpose. One railway line required an amount of Rs. 250 crore. If proper allocation is made, the railway line may be laid pretty quickly. But he only indulges in exhibitionism. Whatever he provides does not yield anything. A sum of Rs. Two crore is to be provided for Angamalai to Sabarmalai rail line. It should be removed from budget if it is not feasible. He only deceives the people by allocating one or two crore rupees.

Sir, my submission is that he should try to honour his promises and needs to provide more allocation for Kottayam-Arimeli line. There is paucity of fund for Angamalai-Sabarmalai line hence the funds should be provided from that purpose. There should be a time bound programme for the doubling of line. The work on Shornur-Mangalore line has been going on for many years, when it is going to be completed? A time table should be prepared for such works and all work should be completed as per it. Southern railway has been given less money in comparison to other railways. Shri Moorthy is present here. I do not believe in regionalism but Southern Railway has not received the funds as it should have it is true for all type of works-be it passenger's amenities or gauge conversion or doubling or laying of new rail line. Why is he ignoring southern railway, what is the reason for it?

Sir, two hon'ble Ministers are present here. I do not know whether they have looked into this matter or not? Southern Railway should also be given the same kind of allocation as is given to eastern, northern and western railways. Passenger amenities should also be improved. The coaches of trains operating in Southern railway are very old. It is more so in Kerala. This matter should also be attended to.

Sir, I would like to demand three new trains from hon'ble Minister. I demand a new train between Kollur and Trivandrum which is an important pilgrim centre. I also demand a new train between Jaipur and Kanyakumari. And the train should be run between Trivandrum and Patna. Shri Nitish Kumar comes from

Patna, and so, I believe, would accede to my demand. With the demand of these three trains, I would like to thank hon'ble Minister. He is trying to fulfill his promises, but funds allocated should be increased. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

*SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA (Mumbai North East): Sir, Railway Budget is common man's budget. While accepting the challenge of competitive markets Railway Minister Hon'ble Shri Nitish Kumar has balanced the socialistic obligation of the Railways with a motto "Railway for All" and also encourage the competitive atmosphere within the Railway.

Firstly, I would thank Hon'ble Railway Minister for sanctioning, providing Rs. 2 Crore for new Railway Station, i.e. Nahur in Central Railway, Mumbai. After 35 years the Mumbai goes for a new Railway Station after Kanjur Marg in 1968.

I would urge Hon'ble Railway Minister to ask the concerned authorities to immediately invite tenders, start the work and develop the new station "Nahur" in a record time. I would request Hon'ble Minister to have Bhumi Punjan during the recess of Budget Session and get the station completed by the end of 2003.

Hon'ble Railway Minister has included a techno feasibility, passenger traffic survey for Kurla-Mahul section of suburban lines of Central Railway, Mumbai. Let the survey be completed in 3 months. 10 lakhs people of that area are urging and demanding to convert the existing goods line into passenger line. For the last 40 years Railways are giving excuses, false explanation & figures. For the last 10 years in Parliament Railways has given reply that Kinson Report has negated conversion of Kurla-Mahul goods line into passenger line, but the fact is that at Kinson Report this section is never studied. They have never mentioned about that. Railway Authorities now compelled to state that whatever they said in past 10 years are wrong.

The Kurla-Mahul, a stretch of 5 Km, can be used for passenger traffic as a shuttle services in the beginning. No large financial burden, Railway track exists for ideal spot, land available for development of Railway Halt Station. I would request Hon'ble Minister to ask the concerned officials to start working into the conversion and do this on war footings.

*Speech was laid on the Table.

Under the passenger amenities Hon'ble Minister has provided several small things which is going to benefit the common commuters. Also provision for constructing roof on various platforms for 12 coach trains have been made. My request to Hon'ble Minister is to complete this work on the local railway stations of Mumbai, i.e, Mulund, Bhandup, Ghatkopar, Chembur, Vikhroli and Mankhurd.

Accidents on suburban Railways, particularly on the Railway stations Govandi, Kanjur Marg are increasing. Though Railways have accepted construction of FOBs on these stations and financial provisions have been made but the work is not being started. Instructions may be given to the Engineering Division, DRM of Central Railway Mumbai Zone to not only start the work but also get it completed within this year.

Though ROB at Ghatkopar, Mumbai provided since long the tendering process is not completed. The work should be started immediately and instructions be given to complete the same in a time bound programme.

Although PRS centers at Mulund (East), Mumbai is started the official approach road from the Main Road, i.e., Sota Bhawan is not developed. Instruction be given to start the process and get the approach road completed.

I would appreciate the Hon'ble Minister's concern about MUTP. Kurla-Thane 6 Line Project is the only main project of MUTP started well in advance. Due to lack of coordination and emphasis to complete the work in time bound programme that work is delayed for 2 years. I would urge the Hon'ble Minister to ask the Railway officials to complete the 5th line work first. There are less than 100 small huts/encroachments to be removed, which can be done within a couple of months. There is no hurdle to complete the work of 5th line between Kurla and Thane. Railway officials are insisting to do simultaneously both 5th and 6th lines work. From the management and return of investment angle any good planner would first complete 5th line, get it started and will try simultaneously to push 6th line's work. Everybody know to complete the 6th lines work rehabilitation of more than 1200 hutments is to be done. It will take 12 months for rehabilitation. Why the 5th line should suffer for unique behaviour of Railways? I would urge you to ask the officials to take it on footings the 5th line work and get it completed by the end of 2003.

Bhandup (West) Booking Office and station area is developed. The remodeling and shifting of the nearby shops needed to be completed in this year. The whole station will have a new look.

I would like to draw the attention of Hon'ble Railway Minister towards the harassment caused to the common commuters. The commuters are paying prices for honesty. To purchase local train tickets for travelling of 20 to 30 minutes a passenger is compelled to wait in queue for 30 to 60 minutes. On major Railway Stations like Mulund, Ghatkopar, Kurla the waiting period is more than 50 minutes. On Saturdays, Sundays and holidays on the Railway Stations like Mankhurd to Kurla, Kurla to Mulund a passenger has to wait for 30 to 60 minutes. This causes tremendous tension, pressure, harassment to ladies with children, senior citizens and common customers. The coupon validating machines are total failure. Machines are not at all working. Coupons purchased by commuters have to be rubber stamped once again on the ticket windows. There is a need to study this problem; a long-term solution is to be sorted out. I would urge Hon'ble Minister to order Central Railway, Commercial Division, Passenger Amenities Department to study the problem and take proper measures.

The ROB work at Ghatkopar is quite slow. The first ROB took 24 months. The construction work for new ROB is started, there is a need to expedite the same Instructions be given to Engineering Division and contractors to get it completed within 9 months.

The passenger amenities needed to be updated on the Division like Mankhurd to Kurla, Kurla to Mulund. There is lot of gap between platforms and coaches. Though financial provisions are made but work is not done. DRM Mumbai be given instruction to complete the site study of all these stations from Mankhurd to Kurla, Kurla to Mulund, prepare a plan and complete the same during 2003-04.

There is a longstanding demand of commuters from Bhandup and Mulund to have PRS centers. The principle, which applies to other parts of the country, cannot be applied to the metro cities like Mumbai. As computerized Season Ticket System already started on these 2 stations, it is easy to start PRS on these stations. The daily commuters are more than 90000. The population in this zone is more than 7 lakhs each. If PRS is started daily ticket purchase from this station will be more than 500 tickets (outstation). I would urge the Hon'ble Railway Minister to ask the concerned authorities to start the PRS.

I once again thank Railway Minister for all the facilities extended to the people of Mumbai and support the proposal of Railway Budget.

DR. C. KRISHNAN (Pollachi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much. I am speaking on behalf of MDMK,

[Dr. C. Krishnan]

which is headed by Shri Vaiko, who is presently in Vellore Jail for the past about 130 days.

There is a long standing demand of the people of my Constituency for the conversion of the metre gauge into broad gauge. This is the route which is very much required by the poor man, business people, and industrialists. The gauge conversion is required from Podanur-Coimbatore to Dindigul and Palghat, Kerala via Pollachi.

I have brought this to the notice of the Ministry of Railways and the Central Government on behalf of the concerned Members of Parliament of those areas. This route has the potential for passengers as well as goods traffic. People from all over India visit this area for business, tourism, and pilgrimage purposes. Palani for pilgrims, Kodaikanal—a hill station near Palani—for tourists, and Top Slip—a wild life sanctuary also for tourists—are the worthy places to visit. They are situated in my Constituency.

The transportation from Mumbai-Delhi-Kolkata to the southern parts of Tamil Nadu will also become easy relieving the present crowded West Coast route. The commercial towns like Pollachi, Udumalpet, and Palani will get direct access to all major cities throughout the country.

Agricultural products like rice, coconut, oil seeds, pulses, and textile goods are being transported by road presently to all parts of the country from these areas. The general public residing in Coimbatore Pollachi, Palghat, Palani, and Dindigul will be benefited by the gauge conversion.

Apart from this, we require a few over-bridges at the following level crossings—Kinathukadavu-Pollachi, Thali Road-Udumalpet near Palani Andavar Mills, Kottur, Malaiyandi Pattanam-Valparai, and Coimbatore Kurichi Sidco Industrial Estate Road-Pollachi Main Road. The quota for the following trains at Udumalpet Railway Station should be increased. For Cheran Express from six to 15, for Nilgiri Express from four to 15, and Kovai Express from four to 15. The Madathukulam Railway Station should be reopened.

Sir, I would request the Railway Minister to take up early steps to complete the broad gauge conversion project of my area, which is a long felt need of the people.

SHRI KHARABELA SWAIN (Balasore): Sir, initially I was not very much inclined to speak but finding no other speaker, I could not resist the temptation of speaking. Anyway, I would be very brief.

I just rise to thank the hon. Railway Minister from the core of my heart for, at least, two three things. The first thing is that he has really tried to make the Railways accident proof. The Railway have introduced track circuiting and new instruments in the engine which can detect if there is any other train on the same track within two kilometres distance. I think the hon. Railway Minister has done an extremely good job to see that travelling by the Railways, in future, is safe. Now, at least, some individual passengers would feel free to travel by the train.

I congratulate him for the freight rationalisation and for the rationalisation of the passenger fare. This was virtually not done before. In all the previous years, the freight charges and the passenger charges were fixed in a very whimsical manner. I would thank the hon. Railway Minister as now he has tried to become a system builder. He has tried to bring in a systemic change through which what percentage of charge will be levied over and above another class will be known to the public.

Everybody will know that while travelling by Shatabdi or by Rajdhani, they would have to pay this much percentage of money. I would like to thank the hon. Railway Minister for this. It is because of this reason that the hon. Minister has not increased the freight charges and in this way he has tried to reattract the goods that got shifted to the roadway sector. I am sure in this process he would now certainly have to depend less on cross-subsidisation.

Sir, I would just like to make two to three suggestions. I would like to appeal to the hon. Minister that if this is the year for passenger amenities—so many Members have spoken about so many things—then I would like to say that the train information service should be improved. Whenever we want to know about the arrival or departure information of trains and ring the given number, either nobody picks up the phone at the other end or if at all anybody picks up the phone, the information would be that the train is on time. But when you reach the station you would find that the train is either 45 minutes or one hour late. How does it happen? I would like to appeal to the hon. Minister—he has done so many good things—to look into this aspect and improve upon the train information system not only in the stations at the bigger cities but also in the stations at the smaller towns.

Sir, I do not know as to what the Railway Minister has done in regard to giving more powers to the RPF. Law and order is a State subject. The hon. Minister must have talked to the Chief Secretaries of all the State Governments through the Union Home Minister. I would like to appeal to him to make a very sincere effort in this regard so that the RPF is given more powers with regard to handling the law and order problems in the trains. Let us not depend on the GRP. All the discarded elements of the State police are sent to man the GRP. People should not have a feeling that they are helpless while they are travelling by trains.

Sir, lastly I would like to mention about a few pending railway projects in my State. The major bottleneck in the State of Orissa is the construction of bridges over Mahanadi and Birupa river in the Golden Quadrilateral from Kolkata to Chennai. This portion from Kapilash Road to Barang is the only single line that exists in that sector because there are four huge bridges that are to be built in this sector. It is because of this reason that a very important place in Orissa, namely Cuttack is not being connected by many trains. Just one year before one fast passenger train that was started from Kharagpur to Bhubaneswar-it has fulfilled the aspirations of so many people in my district of Balasore-does not go *via* Cuttack because of this technical difficulty. I was told that when the Britishers started this Mahanadi bridge, it was completed within a period of two years. Now, the very planning and designing of this bridge has already taken seven years. I would like to very earnestly appeal to the hon. Minister that he should give priority and importance for the completion of the double line of this sector, namely the Kapilash Road to Barang. The construction of the bridges on these two huge rivers of Mahanadi and Birupa should also be completed as quickly as possible.

Sir, there is another train, namely the Hirakud Express that runs from Bhubaneswar to Koraput. I would like to request the hon. Minister to extend this train up to Jaleswar, which lies at the extreme end of Orissa. This would help connecting people from one end of the State to the other.

Sir, last but not least, the Talcher-Bimlagarh is a very important line and it is under construction for the last twenty years. It should be completed quickly. Completion of Lanjigara-Junagada line and doubling of Titlagara-Lanjigara section should be given due importance. In Jan-Shatabdi Express, food should be made optional. I would highlight one specific problem in

the Bhubaneswar-Howrah Jan-Shatabdi Express which has been introduced recently. It has been running almost two-thirds empty because tickets are not issued up to the date of journey. The argument given is that food is being provided in the train and unless one buys the ticket at least two days in advance, food cannot be served. That is why the train is running two-thirds empty. I appeal to the hon. Minister that food should be made optional in this train. These are very popular trains which have fulfilled the aspirations of the people. They can travel in these trains in more numbers provided tickets are issued everyday and also provided food is made optional.

Last but no least, I would like to mention that such a very good Budget has totally finished the business of organising agitations against the Railway Budget in Orissa. For a long time every year it used to be the main occupation of some people who are rendered jobless now! Year after year they used to get this job at least for two months after the introduction of the Railway Budget. But, in the last two years that business has been completely stopped in Orissa. For that reason and also for giving Rs. 417 crore for all the projects in Orissa, I thank the hon. Railway Minister.

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL (Betul): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak in favour of rail budget and I fully support the rail budget presented by the hon'ble Rail Minister. This year's budget is a historical budget. Hon'ble Rail Minister has tried to provide all the facilities to the people with limited resources. Actions always attract criticism be they are good or bad. If the rail fares were increased or freight rate was increased, then he would have been criticised for causing hardship to the poor. But neither the fare, nor freight rate was increased, on the contrary. Effort was made to reduce the fare of upper classes. The fare of Shatabdi express has been reduced. Now he is being criticised on the ground that how will he make up it. It reminds me of the saying of an author that no monument of any critic has been constructed anywhere in the world. Critics will only criticise, but hon'ble Minister will not be deterred by that. He will march on. I again congratulate hon'ble Minister for giving a number of new trains to Madhya Pradesh and also for providing it with passenger amenities in this budget. This year railways is going to complete its 150th year and this year is going to be observed as the year of passenger amenity. The coming year has been dedicated to the passengers and it has been termed as the year of passengers satisfaction. A number of steps relating to safety, security, punctuality and cleanliness would be taken this year. The entire

[Shri Vijay Kumar Khandelwal]

House should appreciate hon'ble Minister for his resolve to work inspite of resource constraints. But people just rise and criticise him only for the sake of criticism. In this budget, the target of laying new line is 225 kms, while gauge conversion target is 775 km and 340 kms of railway lines is to be doubled. In this way the target is more than that fixed for previous years in all the fields. Resources are unchanged and the budget tells us from where the resources will be generated. It has also been asserted that expenses will be curtailed and income from other sources will be increased. All this would take railways further on the path of progress. Today Railway is not only the largest undertaking of this country but of whole world. He is constantly striving to provide more facilities to the people.

Sir, I do not have enough words to appreciate his efforts. Now I would like to apprise hon'ble Minister of some of the problems faced by my parliamentary constituency. He has always obliged me whenever I requested him to give halt to trains in my Parliamentary constituency. I thank him for that. Ghorodogari is an important station of my area where numerous people from UP and Bihar come to work. Its population is 1.5 lakh. It is an important centre as it has coal mines and also thermal power station. We can have an idea of number of passengers using this station from the fact that PRS has been proposed to be opened from this year.

Betul is the headquarters of my parliamentary constituency which is located between Nagpur and Bhopal. It is also a station. The trains coming from Gorakhpur cover the 190 km distance between Nagpur and Betul in three hours. When one travels to Bhopal from Betul, it takes three hours to reach Itarsi which is 107 kms away. Train has to halt at signal in forests as its running time is more than necessary. If these trains halt at Ghorodogari, then at least 1.5 lakh people from UP, Bihar and North India who work in coal mines and thermal power stations would benefit. Similarly other trains crossing through Ghorodogari, such as Swarna Jayanti express which comes from Vishakhapatnam, Samta express and Mahanadi express which runs within MP only, does not attract passengers after the creation of new Chhattisgarh State. It has been told last year that the revenue of railways has declined. Therefore, Mahanadi Express running between Bhopal and Bilaspur should be given stoppage at Ghorodogari. When I was a student in Nagpur, there was an express train between Jabalpur and Nagpur. This year, he has announced in Railway budget that the express train between Jabalpur and Nagpur which was discontinued 20-25 years ago would

again be introduced. It will be very close to my parliamentary constituency. People from that area have to visit Nagpur for shopping and to buy goods on the occasion of wedding etc. Therefore, it should also have a halt in Ghoradogari. It should also halt at Multai, Betul and Amla, which is a junction. Similarly he has introduced a new train from Indore to Nagpur two months back. It has greatly benefited people. So, he now has announced that this train would run two days a week in place of once a week. All the stations falling within Betul district Parliamentary constituency are generating healthy revenue. Both the number of passengers and the revenue of railways have increased. It should also be given halt in Ghorodogari and Multai.

My Parliamentary constituency also has Harda district. Hon'ble Minister provided the halt of Kamayani express at Harda last year. Harda is district headquarter and PRS has also been started there. He has figures of revenue which says that revenue is constantly increasing and a number of Mumbai bound trains go from that route. The journey between Itarsi and Khandwa is very long. People will benefit greatly if Pawan express and Sachkhand is given halt there.

Timarni station in Harda district falls under Bhopal division. Jhelum Express on its way from Jammu to Pune halts here but on its return journey it does not stop here. This matter has been raised to authorities a number of times as local people need to travel to Pune and Mumbai, too. Therefore, it should halt on its return journey too.

Similarly, there is Khirkiya station where Tapti-Ganga, Lokmanya Tilak express, Bhopal-Mumbai Express should halt. With these words, I once again congratulate hon'ble Minister for budget and whole heartedly support this budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Jaisingrao Gaekwad Patil, Shri Dalpat Singh Parste and Shri Raghunath Jha would lay their speeches on the Table the House.

*SHRI JAISINGRAO GAIKWAD PATIL (Beed): Sir, I welcome Rail Budget 2003-04. Introduction of new trains, provisions for passenger amenities, no change in rail fares are some of its prominent features. I congratulate hon. Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and our Railway Minister hon. Nitish Kumarji.

Sir, this is a common man's Budget but it has done injustice to my constituency Beed-Maharashtra. Sanction for laying of a new line in Beed-Maharashtra, between

*Speech was laid on the Table.

Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli (West) was accorded in 1997 but since then only Rs. 1, 2, 3, 5 have been provided. Last year Rs. 15 crore were allocated. It was hoped that this year this provision would be hiked to Rs. 100 crore. Not only me, entire people of my constituency are furious as hon. Minister has made a provision of only Rs. 15.37 crore.

Sir, my constituency Beed-Maharashtra is a very backward area. Unemployment and famine are not leaving it alone. There are no employment opportunities. No rail, no industry, thus no railway. My constituency Beed is entwined between these two.

Sir, my constituency is 150 kms away from railway and aerodrome. Lakhs of labourers of all castes/religions leave this district and travel entire Maharashtra to earn their livelihood and return after 5-7 months. Economically their life is insecure.

Sir, there is an urgent need of Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli (West) line for economic development of Beed district. But in view of meagre allotment every year, there is distant possibility of completion of this line.

Sir, people of my constituency desire early laying of Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli (West) rail line. Several agitations have been held in its support and many freedom fighters, all political parties and social organisations have been demanding its completion.

Sir, I would like to urge hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar to reconsider provision number 15-37 and keeping in view the sentiments of public the allocation for the year 2003-2004 for Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli line be hiked from Rs. 15.37 crore to Rs. 50 crore. I conclude with these words.

*SHRI DALPAT SINGH PARSTE (Shahdol): Sir, first of all, I would like to thank hon. Minister of Railways and hon. Prime Minister for having introduced three new trains via my constituency. It has been an outstanding demand for the last 50 years.

In addition, on behalf of people of my constituency, I submit the following:

1. New Railway divisional office should be opened at Shahdol as after creation of Bilaspur divisional

office, one divisional office is at Bilaspur and second one is being opened at Raipur, just 100 km away. The distance from Bilaspur-Katani is 325 kms, Chirmiri to Bilaspur is 230 kms and Vishrampur to Bilaspur is 250 kms and very large quantity of coal is transported from this area. Therefore, from administrative angle Shahdol is most appropriate place for opening of divisional office. Several unoccupied official and residential buildings are available here.

2. 300 employees were removed in 1992 and similarly 206 employees were removed in 2000 by closing down sick line and yard. Residential building and coaching complex vacated by those employees are available.
3. There is no charging and washing facility between Anuppur-Chirmiri, Anuppur-Bilaspur and Bilaspur to Katani therefore for the purpose of repair, rakes are sent either to Bilaspur Katani whereas coaching complex can be constructed at low cost in Shahdol as enough space of old locoshed and many useful machines including washing kit are available there.
4. Travel area allowance be provided to railway employees working under travel block at Sohagpur-Naunjabad, Anuppur, Kotama, Budhar, Amlai, Bijuri, Umariya station on the lines of other Central Government Employees.
5. Wherever single line exists between Anuppur-Bilaspur it should be doubled immediately and a third line should be laid between Anuppur-Katani.
6. 7057-58 Kochin-Bilaspur halts for 18 hours at Bilaspur. It should be run from Shahdol.
7. 8253-54 Amarkantak Express should run daily.
8. The frequency of 8407-08 Bhuneshwar-Nizamuddin should be made daily and it should stop at Amlai and Umariya.
9. A separate bogie for Lucknow should be provided with 8233-34 Narmada Express which should be attached to Chitrakoot Express at Katani on the line of Bilaspur-Lucknow sleeper coach provided earlier.
10. At least 3 General coaches should be provided with each passenger train.

[Shri Dalpat Singh Parste]

11. Proper arrangement for carriage of goods, its safety and shade should be made.
12. Areas providing more revenue should be developed on the basis of priority. Shahdol is a leading case in this regard.
13. Wherever pavement railway crossing does not exist, it should be provided.
14. Station should be modernised, upgraded and proper arrangements for supply of drinking water and toilets be made.
15. Waiting rooms are not available at many stations and there is no VIP waiting room at district centre Umaria and Shahdol. These should be provided.

*SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): Sir, I support the Railway Budget presented in Lok Sabha. Though keeping in view the need for development of backward areas, sanction has been accorded for laying of new lines and conversion of meter gauge into broad gauge has also been recommended, yet some areas have been just left. For example Samastipur, Khagaria, Hajipur, Vaishali, Sugoli, Sitamarhi, Shivhar, Mirganj, Devaria (U.P.) have been left. I hope hon. Minister would surely take steps to provide rail connectivity to these backward areas of Bihar.

Stress on railway safety in the Budget is a praiseworthy step. Empowerment of RPF too is a good step.

Crimes in railways is a matter of concern. Contract mafia rule the roast in railways. Law has become helpless in this regard. Hon Minister should pay attention in this regard.

Corruption in railways has increased unabatedly. In this regard, I would like to draw kind attention of hon. Minister towards the following:

Indian Railway procures hydraulic system operated jack instrument. It is utilised for putting derailed coaches back on rails. Serious scam has taken place in its purchase. In place of an Indian firm it has been purchased from a black listed German firm. During trial, instrument manufactured by Indian firm was found to be as satisfactory as German instrument and in some of the cases it was found better. Less price was quoted by Indian company. Still, the instrument was not purchased

from Indian company causing great loss to the Government of India.

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Indian Railway procures hydraulic system operated jack instrument. It is utilised for putting derailed coaches back on rails. Serious scam has taken place in its purchase. In place of an Indian firm it has been purchased from a black listed German firm. During trial, instrument manufactured by Indian firm was found to be as satisfactory as German instrument and in some of the cases it was found better. Less price was quoted by Indian company. Still, the instrument was not purchased from Indian company causing great loss to the Government of India.

Only two German companies in the world manufacture railway instrument-these are Lucas and MFD. Instrument manufactured by MFD is more reliable. Therefore, its costlier than that of Lucas. Both these companies are charging arbitrarily from Indian railways. Meanwhile an Indian company named Bemco Hydraulic Ltd., Belgam manufactured similar instrument. Bemco tried its best so that railways could conduct a trial. And if it was found as per the specified criteria railways could buy it. Bemco was even ready to get the trial conducted free of cost. But its very sad that the Railway Board paid no heed towards it and trial proposal was rejected. In this regard, former Prime Minister Chandrashekhar wrote a letter to Minister of Railways and also State Minister of Railways requesting for getting the trial of Bemco's instrument

conducted so as to verify its claim. Almost three months after this request railways conducted the trial. Trials were conducted twice and both the times the instrument was found successful. Despite all this, no order was placed to Bemco. Hon. Chandrashekharji wrote letter on 24 January, 2002 and German Companies got the tender opened on 31 March, 2002. Terms and conditions of contract were such that only German companies could get the order. The Minister of State for Railways had demanded the concerned file which was not shown to him. When the file was put up to him he cast apprehension in the note. Hon. Member, Swami Chinmayanand, wrote a letter to hon. Prime Minister Vajpayee in this regard. Revised tender was floated in January 2002. Amendments in tender were done in favour of German firms. It was postponed 16 times.

Order was placed to Lucas and Bemco was nowhere in sight. Officers say that instrument of Lucas does not operate satisfactorily nor Lucas repairs it. Lucas has no factory in India whereas Bemco repairs at very lesser rates. Bemco's instrument is good one and its repair cost is quite less, still no order was placed to Bemco. Powerful officers in Railways have been found working as agent of German company. Orders were placed to Lucas in a clap of manner whereby railways suffered a loss of crores of rupees and instruments received were also not good.

Lucas charged the price in Euro causing outflow of foreign exchange. Had the order been placed to Bemco, precious foreign exchange could have been saved.

The matter of bogus recruitment in connivance with Computer India Ltd by Mahendraghat Railway Recruitment Board has come to light. An FIR to this effect was lodged in Khagaul Police Station. Chairman of Mahendraghat Recruitment Board, Patna responsible for conducting bogus recruitments was promoted as Chairman, Railway Board. Hon. Minister of Railways himself had assured that the matter would be inquired into by the CBI. Six months have passed since then. Then what is the justification in not conducting inquiry and posting Shri A.K. Singh to Railway Board? Similarly, there is an urgent need of over bridges between Hajipur to Chapara, Siwan to Gopalganj. I hope hon. Minister will not allow scarcity of funds to come against carrying out works like construction of a rail bridge on river Ganga at Patna and Munger within a specified time period, laying of broad gauge from Kaptanganj, Thawe Siwan up to Chapara, new line between Sitamarhi-Muzaffarpur, broad gauge between Darbhanga-Narkatiaganj via Sitamarhi.

In view of time constraints I am presenting my written speech. It should be treated as a part of proceeding.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The House now stands adjourned till 11 a.m. tomorrow.

20.43 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, March 6, 2003/Phalguna 15, 1924 (Saka).

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