

He was an erudite orator. His forceful and effective participation in parliamentary proceedings left an indelible imprint and placed him in the rank of eminent parliamentarian about whom this House and the people of this country will always feel proud of and remember him with gratitude.

Shri Joshi passed away on 15 July, 1991 at the age of 71.

We deeply mourn the loss of these friends and I am sure the House will join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved families.

The House may now stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the deceased.

*The Members then stood in silence for a short while*

**SHRI PIUS TIRKEY** : Sir, it appears that the ruling Congress Party has boycotted the proceedings of the House today as only a few Ministers are sitting here.

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

#### **Electrification of Railway Routes**

\*41. **SHRI ASHOKRAO ANANDRAO DESHMUKH** : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the target set for the electrification of railway routes during 1990-91;

(b) whether the target has been fully achieved ;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and

(d) the target set for the year 1991-92 ?

[*English*]

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALIKARJUN)** : (a) Electrification of 1040 route kms. was targetted for completion during 1990-91.

(b) No Sir.

(c) Due to teething problems encountered in commissioning of the associated new communication system.

(d) Electrification of 675 route kms.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI ASHOKRAO ANANDRAO DESHMUKH** : Mr. Speaker, Sir, requisite progress in electrification of Railway routes has not been achieved so far. The shortage of coal or the constraints in transportation of coal leads to more and more consumption of diesel. Thus the burden on foreign exchange is steadily increasing. Hence, I want that all the railway lines that are constructed from today onwards should be electrified. As per your statement, you had proposed to electrify 1014 km. of railway routes during 1990-91. I would like to know the names of those States where you have carried out the electrification work and whether certain portions of Maharashtra have also been covered under it? Is the Government going to electrify Manmad-Aurangabad Parbhani-Parsi Railway line falling in my constituency ?

[English]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Sir, the lines which have been included during 1990-91 are :

Name	Route Kilometre
1. Palsora—Maksi	75
2. Badnera—Wardha (which is also in Maharashtra)	99
3. Nagpur—Itarsi	297
4. Itarsi—Piplani	109
5. Bhusawal—Asirgarh	59
6. Durg—Tharsa	225
7. Morrapur—Salem—Sankaridurg	99
8. Magnesite—Metturdam	37
9. Jollarpettai—Kuppam	38
10. Yamuna Bridge—Agra	5
Total Route Kilometres	1040

[Translation]

SHRI ASHOKRAO ANANDRAO DESHMUKH : My question is that by 1985—90 you electrified 9252 kms of railway route. Under the Seventh Five Year Plan, the electrification work on 2812 kms, of railway routes has been completed. All these lines are located in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Under this plan, no electrification work was undertaken in Maharashtra. Perhaps Maharashtra has been ignored once again in the Eighth and Ninth plan also and there is a proposal to electrify the Delhi—Ambala—Ludhiana, Gumia—Pathratu, Sitarampur—Jhajha, Bokaro—Puri—Hatia, Bondamunda and Ahmedabad—Gandhinagar lines only in these plans. As such I would like to know whether the Manmad—Aurangabad line which is a metre-gauge line, would be electrified or not under the Eighth or Ninth Plan on which the conversion work is going on ; because our area is a backward one and three 'Jyotirlingas' and Guru

Govind Singh's Gurudwara are located there and many devotees go there.

[English]

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Sir, so far as the suggestion of the hon. Member is concerned, at this stage, I cannot say anything.

SHRI K. RAMAMURTHEE TINDIVANAM : Sir, the Madras Rapid Transport System was taken up a few years back and the date of completion of this project is yet to be decided. The progress of the work is very-very slow and is adding to the sorrow of the Madras City Transport system. May I know from the hon. Minister the reason behind the enormous delay in completion of this project. This project covers the entire city's population.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN : Sir the question which the hon. Member has put is not connected with this question.

SHRI K. RAMAMURTHEE TINDIVANAM : I have not completed my question. The Minister is ignorant

of the problem. He has not answered my question. He has intervened to say that it does not pertain to the main question. My question pertains to the main question. The Madras Rapid transport system comes under electrification. Perhaps the Minister is not aware of it. What is happening to this system ?

**THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF) :** The electrification of the railway lines is the ultimate goal of the railways in our country. The electrification needs very heavy investment. We know from the debate which took place either in this House or in the other House that the Members of Parliament are keen about the developmental activities in their regions, in their constituencies, and they have been demanding them in their regions. We have always been sympathetic towards them. I can assure the House that we are equally concerned about what the Members feel about it. But due to the constraint of resources, we cannot do it as quickly as they want. Taking into account our limit and your limit, we can speak and satisfy our electorates outside, but we have to go in a planned and phased manner depending on the density of the traffic. I understand what the Hon. Member has been talking about rapid transportation system in Madras. It is suburban. Unless we complete the trunk route where the density of traffic is heavy, we cannot know suburban problems are also growing which we cannot ignore. As and when we try to come out of the problems and as we feel comfortable that we are in a position to take up more and more responsibility, more

not just go into the suburban. We and more work, we will continue to do it.

[Translation]

**SHRI SHANKARJI VAGHELA :** I would like to know from the Hon. Minister as to how much the diesel engine is cheaper in comparison to steam engine and how much cheaper is electric engine in comparison to diesel engine ? Today there is acute shortage of electricity in the country and the gas worth crores of rupees is flared in the country. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas is also present here. Will the Government undertake the work of Railway electrification by generating more and more electricity from the gas ?

[English]

**SHRI C.K. JAFFER SARIEF :** The policy is to phase out the steam locos, which we are doing in a phased manner. So far as diesel and electricity are concerned, the cost variation is not much. We have to depend upon outside for it. The electrification of railway lines is the ultimate goal. So far as gas is concerned, what he said, it is not with us. I do not know how it will work; whether it would be possible to do it. But, anyhow, we will examine it.

**DR. (SMT.) K.S. SOUNDARAM :** About the electrification of railway lines, I request the Hon. Minister to please tell us the progress made in the electrification of Jolarpet to Erode railway line in Tamil Nadu and in particular between Salem and Coimbatore. I have seen that the work is going on at a snail's pace. I request the Hon. Minister to take steps to

speed up this project and extend it upto Coimbatore at the earliest.

**SHRI MALLIKARJUN :** By this year, Jolarpet to Erode railway line will be completed; and from Erode to Ernakulam will be taken up in the future.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI KALKA DAS :** Since important questions on the subject could not be asked, half-an-hour discussion may please be allowed on this question.

[*English*]

#### REDUCTION IN PRICES OF DIESEL AND KEROSENE

\*42. **SHRI S.B. SINGH:**

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES :**

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government contemplate to reduce the prices of diesel and kerosene;

(b) if so, the time by which prices are likely to be reduced; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND) :** (a) to (c) Any change in the prices of petroleum products is considered by the Government, keeping in view supplies, growth in demand and other socio-economic factors.

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES :** Sir, I would like to make a point about the reply itself. The reply is no reply to the question that I have asked. My question is very categorical. Whether the Government contemplates to reduce the prices but you are saying, "Any change in the prices..." So. I would like to have your direction on this matter, because it is not only Question No. 4 that is the issue I am raising. I want the Government to be very specific in its reply. I would like to have your direction on this.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Please put your supplementary and extract the direction and the reply.

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:** The direction has to come from you, not from the Government.

**MR. SPEAKER :** Speakers do not give directions as to how the Ministers should reply to questions. It is not for the Speaker to say as to how the reply should be given.

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES :** You have to protect the rights of the House.

**MR. SPEAKER :** That is why, the supplementary is there.

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES :** I have asked a question. I have to elicit the correct reply. The Minister is not giving a correct reply.

**MR. SPEAKER :** As a good parliamentarian you know how to get the reply. You will get it.

**SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES :** I would like to make an observation.