

**SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA:** Sir, Khushinagar, near Deoria, is the biggest centre of Buddhism in the world. This place gets visitors from Sri Lanka, China and Burma. But this place is not developed and even basic amenities are not available for visitors.

**MR. SPEAKER:** This question is related to Madhya Pradesh. If you have a question regarding Bihar the hon. Minister will ask for notice.

**SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA:** If the hon. Minister asks for a notice it is all right.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The hon. Minister has said that.

**SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:** Sir, Vidisha and Sanchi attract foreign tourists. I had an opportunity to tour Vidisha for a few days. I felt that facilities presently available for foreign tourists are not adequate. Will the hon. Minister improve the facilities in Vidisha in order to attract foreign tourists?

**SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:** Sir, the question pertains to Burhanpur. A number of projects have been taken up in Vidisha and Sanchi in consultation with Madhya Pradesh Government. Vidisha, which is a recognised tribal circuit, includes Bhopal, Sanchi and Udaygiri circuit. We will certainly look into the possibility of developing the area from the point of view of tourism.

[English]

#### **Allotment of LPG agencies to Village Panchayats**

\*473. **SHRI M.R. KADAMBUR JANARTHANAN:** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to allot LPG agencies to Village Panchayats;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR):** (a) to (c) LPG agencies are being set up in

places having a population of 20,000 and above, keeping in view the product availability, viability considerations etc.

**SHRI M.R. JANARTHANAN:** Mr. Speaker Sir, the answer is not only unsatisfactory but also vague and incomplete. My point in asking the question is whether or not the Government will set up LPG agencies in each Village Panchayat Union Headquarters in order to reduce the gap in the living standard of the urbanites and the rural people, keeping in view that there is deforestation when the villages use wood as fuel even today. And curtailing deforestation is a policy matter of this Government. My original question is only this point. But it is put as only Village Panchayats. I want to know whether the Government will set up LPG gas agencies in each Village Panchayat Union Headquarters or not. By doing so, the population criteria will also be satisfied which is more than a lakh and also time and money will be saved and the hygienic system will also be followed in the villages.

**SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR:** Sir, it has been the Government's constant effort to increase the availability of LPG to our rural areas. But at the same time, it may not be possible to consider LPG marketing to all the Village Panchayats on account of the limited product availability and large number of existing unviable distributorships. Almost 40 per cent of the distributorships which are operating all over the country are considered to be unviable. Due to these reasons, it will not be possible to give an assurance that each Village Panchayat will be given the distributorship.

**SHRI M.R. JANARTHANAN:** Sir, the hon. Minister is talking about the availability of gas and several times, it is said in Parliament that gas is being flared up everyday in Bombay High. Even in the Cauvery Basin, tapping of gas is at a very slow pace. Therefore, availability of gas, which the Government is answering, is not relevant to the question. So much gas is being wasted.

**MR. SPEAKER:** You ask the question.

**SHRI M.R. JANARTHANAN:** Sir, the

Minister has told about the availability of gas. And I am explaining that part of it.

MR. SPEAKER: You do not have to make a speech for that. You have to put only the question.

SHRI M.R. JANARTHANAN: Sir, the village ladies are still weeping due to smoke caused due to fire.

MR. SPEAKER: Is that the question? Would you like to ask the Minister whether he will be wiping out their tears or not?

*(Interruptions)*

SHRI M.R. JANARTHANAN: This question is regarding the rural people...

MR. SPEAKER: If you ask a pointed question, you will get a pointed reply.

SHRI M.R. JANARTHANAN: But the answer given is negative. The answer says that it is not possible. I request that at least in the 8th Plan period, more and more village panchayat headquarters should be given gas agencies, so that the gap in the living standards of the rural people and the urbanites will be reduced. Rural welfare is the main policy of this Government. When this Government says that it is not possible, it is against the wishes of the rural people. That is why I am asking a pertinent question. Without answering negatively, will the Government come forward and say that they will consider it at least during the 8th Five Year Plan?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: We have not answered negatively. We have said that we are continuously making efforts to spread the availability of LPG to rural areas. The hon. member is mixing up the gas which is being produced and a part of the gas which is being flared in our oil fields such as Bombay High with the LPG, which is a constituent and which has to be separately produced. We have a plan for producing more LPG in the country. We have an immediate plan and I have got the figures here. The schemes are being projected over the 8th Five Year Plan and it is our effort to see that the backlog of nearly 70 lakh applications which are already pending for LPG is expeditiously cleared. The question about LPG is different from gas flaring.

As regards gas flaring, we have a different project for that and World Bank project has already been sanctioned. For production of LPG, we have a different programme and I have the details of the programme here.....

MR. SPEAKER: If the question is lengthy, the reply need not be lengthy too.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, my answer is that depending on the market demand, it will be our effort to see that LPG is made available at the earliest to the largest number of village panchayats.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Time and again, Government has been complaining about the shortage of gas cylinders. Because of the shortage, there is delay in the distribution system. In Bombay High, earlier there was a proposal to supply gas through the existing pipeline of the Bombay Gas Company.

MR. SPEAKER: I think it is something different. This is about the LPG.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: If gas is supplied through pipelines, in some areas, there will be that many more cylinders available for distribution in rural areas. Time and again, there is a proposal but the Government has not done anything.

MR. SPEAKER: Only the word 'gas' is common in this. There is nothing else common.

SHRI SHOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE: The hon. Minister has said that the Government is taking steps to sanction LPG agencies to those places having a population of 20,000. Is it not a fact that there are several places in Andhra Pradesh with more than 20,000 population and which do not yet have the LPG agencies, whereby the consumers are suffering a lot? I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what steps the Government is going to take in the near future to sanction LPG agencies to such places which come within the scope of your normal yardstick.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: The hon. Member's presumption is correct. There will be a large number of areas in the country with more than 20,000 population, where there are no agencies. I have answered about the constraints of the

Government. As far as Andhra Pradesh is concerned, there are about 14 lakh consumers already and the waiting list is 3.2 lakhs. I have got the consumer list and the waiting list figures for all the States. The satisfaction of the LPG applicants is met progressively depending upon the supply-demand position and the projected work marketing plan of the oil companies.

[Translation]

SHRI CHHEDI PASWAN : The hon. Minister has stated that due to non-availability of LPG, agencies cannot be allotted to Panchayats. Agencies are set up in areas having population of 20,000 and above. No block in the country has a population of less than 20,000. So in view of this, does the Government propose to set up LPG agencies at block level?

[English]

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR : Sir, I have already answered that question. There are many areas in the country where there is no gas agency though the population of that area is 20,000. Because of the limited availability of the LPG and constraints in increasing the availability over a time period, we have a marketing plan in each State. The number of LPG dealership is being progressively increased by each of the oil companies. When they make a marketing plan, the hon. Member's concern is being taken into account by the individual oil companies.

[Translation]

SHRI RATILAL VARMA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon. Minister has stated that due to non-availability of LPG, agencies cannot be allotted to Panchayats. But orders were issued to release LPG connections in villages four months back. In each village not more than two LPG consumers are there. So gas agencies are not willing to deliver gas cylinders in villages. Is the Government willing to allow gas consumers to collect cylinders on their own?

[English]

M.A. SPEAKER : I don't think this supplementary arises from the main ques-

tion. If you want to reply, I have no objection. He is asking whether you are going to give special concession for the people coming from village.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR : There is no such proposal.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : Sir, to another question regarding gas connection on M.P.s' recommendation, the Minister replied that all the recommendations have been replied to. In fact, it has not happened. Many people have not yet received the gas connections recommended by M.P.s.

MR. SPEAKER : He needs some more information from the Ministry.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : I would like to know can it be that many of the recommendations by M.P.s could not be met because of the non-availability of any agency if different panchayats. Part (b) of the question is that if there is no agency within a population of 20,000 people, can an agency be advised to cover such a distance with the help of some small increase in the fares so that the supply is made to those people also. I would like to say that if there are recommendations from Members of Parliament, those recommendations shall be fulfilled in any case and no recommendation of a M.P. would be left unattended to, provided it is within the quota.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR : Sir, all the recommendations regarding LPG by M.P.s are being taken care of by the Ministry. We have a computerised list of the number of recommendations given by each M.P. and the number which has already been allotted and what remains in the quota of each M.P...*(Interruptions)* I have not finished.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : We have received so many letters that our recommendations have not been fulfilled.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR : Please be patient. I have not finished. I was saying that the Ministry has computerised information of the number of applications recommended by each M.P. and the number of applications which have

already been satisfied and the balance in each M.P.s quota. That information can be made available to each M.P. so that he comes to know what is the un-allotted quota. This I think will satisfy the Members.

**SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE** : This is not true. We have to move a Privilege Motion against the Minister.

Whether they are computerised or not, whether they know about it or not, I do not know. (*Interruptions*) But they have been sanctioned, and not received by the persons concerned. (*Interruptions*)

**SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA** : There are some isolated territories in the country. The country is celebrating the birth anniversary of Shri Rajiv Gandhi who was very much concerned about the poor people and the people who are living in the remote and isolated territories of this country. On this occasion, will the Government consider providing gas connections to the people who are living in the hilly and remote areas where special type of problems are prevailing in providing gas connections?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND)** : I also share the concern of the hon. Member for the people who are living in the remote and hilly areas of the country. It is a good suggestion; it is a worthy suggestion. The Government will consider this suggestion.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA**: Sir, as several hon. M.P.s. have said that they have received a number of letters about non-release of LPG and telephone connections and as I have also received some letters in this regard, will the Government look into all such cases? Last time the hon. Minister sanctioned connections. A list showing such connections was received. But the allottees have not obtained actual connections. How has it happened? I firmly believe that connections were released by the Department, but the hon. MPs have not yet received letters in this connection. Till now I used to think that this has happened in my case only, but it has happened in other cases too. Therefore the whole episode

needs to be investigated and the outcome known to us.

[*English*]

This is a very serious matter.

[*Translation*]

**MR. SPEAKER**: Will it be investigated?

[*English*]

**SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR**: Wherever the Government have sanctioned the applications recommended by the Members of Parliament and where the actual connections have not been obtained by the consumers, in such cases, immediate rectificatory action will be taken by the Ministry.

[*Translation*]

**SHRI MADAN LAL KHURANA**: My question is, all this has taken place in wholesale and what will be their fate now?

[*English*]

**SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE**: Should we lay that list on the Table of the House? Let the Minister reply. (*Interruptions*)

**MR. SPEAKER**: It should not be like this. The Minister said that we will give you the information. (*Interruptions*)

**MR. SPEAKER**: After the Minister replies, he is replying. (*Interruptions*)

**SHRI B. SHANKARANAND**: I share the concern of the hon. Members regarding this because they have been complaining to me both inside the House and also outside the House that such a thing is happening. (*Interruptions*) You first listen to me. I am agreeing to your suggestion; I am not disagreeing to what you are saying. If there has been any lapse on the part of the Company in giving the right information to the consumers whom the MPs have recommended and they have not received any reply, it is a matter to be looked into; and I promise to the House that I will look into the matter and take corrective measures. (*Interruptions*)

**SHRI HARI KISHORE SINGH**: Ever since this LPG is being supplied, only the urban people are benefiting from it. Will the Minister consider allotting one-third of the available LPG for the rural people?

**SHRI B. SANKARANAND**: May I draw

the attention of the House to a very serious fact, that the population of this country is increasing by leaps and bounds? I do not think that we have been able to produce LPG to match the demand of such an increasing population. Besides this, there has been a shift in population right from the rural areas to the urban areas and the population pattern in this country is changing very fast. So, to plan for such a changing population it is very difficult with the available material for LPG. But it is our responsibility to make it available.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE: This shift in the population from rural to urban areas is not much.

SHRI B. SANKARANAND: If at all the Hon. Member can also help in influencing the views and shaping the opinion of the society, that we must also control the population, then the LPG distribution will take care of itself.

#### **Railway Electrification in Maharashtra**

\*474. SHRI ANNA JOSHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the proposals for railway electrification in Maharashtra pending for clearance; and

(b) the details of the railway electrification works under progress in that State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALLIKARJUN): (a) Nil.

(b) As a part of electrification of Delhi-Bombay trunk route via Central Railway and Howrah-Bombay trunk route via Nagpur, work is in progress in sections Waghoda-Bhusawal and Bhandara Road-Nagpur which fall in Maharashtra State. Electrification of Diva-Panvel Section is also in progress.

SHRI ANNA JOSHI: First of all, what are the proposals cleared for electrification other than Waghoda-Bhusawal, Diva-Panvel and Howrah-Bombay Sections?

Secondly, what is the cost per kilometre of electrification and thirdly, when will this be completed?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: We have already informed that there is no proposal,

which has been sent to the Planning Commission for clearance.

SHRI ANNA JOSHI: I am asking about the proposals which have been cleared, along with these three.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: As far as Maharashtra is concerned there is no other proposal which has been cleared.

SHRI ANNA JOSHI: I agree. Which are the ones which have been cleared?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: That is what I am saying. There is no proposal pending for clearance. These three proposals which I have mentioned—where electrification is in progress—will be completed by March 1992. These projects which are in progress involve 132 route kilometres.

So far as the cost is concerned, it costs Rs. 40 lakhs per one route kilometre for electrification.

SHRI ANNA JOSHI: What are the proposals for the next five years in Maharashtra for electrification of the Railways? And secondly, is the Konkan Railway route going to be electrified from the beginning?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: So far as the Konkan Railway is concerned, there is no proposal at this moment to think about electrification of that line.

Now we are only concentrating to see that the trunk routes are completed so that it will facilitate the commuters.

About the proposals for electrification of lines in Maharashtra, we have asked for the survey of the line from Jalgaon to Udhna and after the survey is completed we will consider this line.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: Sir, the Minister has given an assurance that by March 1992, Diva-Panvel track will be electrified. I would like to know from the Minister whether side by side there is any proposal for starting a suburban railway on Diva-Panvel railway after its electrification is completed.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: Sir, this is only for the completion of Diva-Panvel track, which is 24 kms.

So far as suburban railway is concerned, at the moment I cannot furnish any information about it.