

progress of the country has come to a standstill. On the one hand there is a proposal of increasing the capacity of transportation of goods in railway wagons, on the other the capacity of the trucks has been decreased. As a result, transportation is getting costlier. Heavy vehicles are being run on the roads but there is ban on the issuance of driving licences for heavy vehicles. My State Punjab is an example of this. Because of the setting up of heavy industries, big irrigation projects in the State and also transportation of foodgrains on a very large scale, there is a existing roads are not able to bear so much traffic. Therefore, I request the Central Government to take necessary amendments in Motor Vehicle Act to increase loading capacity of heavy vehicles.

(v) Need for early completion of Second Phase of Kollam bye pass in Kerala

[English]

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : Kollam Bye pass in National Highway is a project included in the Eighth Five Year Plan. It has four phases. The first phase of the work from Mylakkad to Ayathil has been completed by spending more than nine crores of rupees. Unless the other phases are completed, the work is of no use.

Hence, I urge upon the Minister of Surface Transport to include the said work in the Ninth Five Year Plan and also to include the second phase of the said work in the next Annual Plan with utmost priority.

(vi) Need to Expedite Brahmaputra Valley Exploration Project in Assam

DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA (Lakhimpur) : The North Eastern Region of India is a reservoir of natural resources like coal, limestone, oil and natural gas. Due to lack of proper initiative to explore and utilize these resources during the last 50 years of Independence, the region remained underdeveloped. The people of Assam had to agitate for establishment of the existing toy refineries. Crude oil in the country was first discovered in Assam by the British, and the first refinery was set up at Digboi, a century ago. Since then, the associated gas has been flared which is now worth more than three crores of rupees a day. It is unfortunate that not a single major industry based on natural gas was cleared by the Central Government. The Assam Gas Cracker Project and the Amguri Power Project has been delayed because of the fact that OIL and ONGC expressed inability to supply the committee quantity of gas despite the availability of a number of untrapped gas wells to explore. In addition, adequate investment was not made in Assam during the past few decades either to increase crude oil production or to preserve the flared gas and to trap the free gas. It is surprising that Petroleum Ministry is reluctant to invest in the domestic production of gas and oil in Assam at a time

when hundreds of crores of rupees are to be wasted in importing gas and oil through pipeline. The Brahmaputra Valley Exploration Project taken up during the Eighth Plan period was not implemented in its true earnest. As a consequence, there has been frequent hike in the prices of petroleum products in the country.

I, therefore, request the Central Government to expedite the Brahmaputra Valley Exploration Project and for taking urgent steps to trap free gas with adequate measures for preservation and for prevention of criminal flaring of gas in the interests of rapid industrialisation in the North Eastern India.

[Translation]

(vii) Need to Reopen closed Mills to Protect the Interests of Workers

PROF. OM PAL SINGH 'NIDAR' (Jalesar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, today when the industries of our country are already passing through a transition period, Indian industries are badly affected due opening multinational companies in the country. Some prestigious industries, like Nepa Mills, Nepa Nagar in the field of newsprints and Hind lamps, Shikohabad in the field of lamps manufacturing are closed down. At both these places thousands of workers are on the verge of starvation. About 50 thousand families associated with these factories and industries are passing through very hard time. The future of the workers and their families associated with these industries is entirely in dark.

Therefore I would like to request the Union Government through you that in order to save the lives of these workers and their dependants, these big industries should be revived immediately.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Situation arising out of the Allahabad High Court Judgement Regarding Imposition of the President's Rule in Uttar Pradesh

14.26 hrs.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to make a statement on the situation arising out of the High Court judgement regarding Imposition of the President's Rule in Uttar Pradesh.

The matter of imposition of President's rule in Uttar Pradesh consequent to a situation where no single party or combination of parties was able to secure