

15.29 hrs.

[English]

**ANNOUNCEMENT RE: AMENDMENTS TO
THE MOTION OF THANKS ON THE
PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

MR. CHAIRMAN: As per established practice, amendments to the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address are to be moved after the proposer of the Motion and the Seconder of the Motion have concluded their speeches. As the speech of the seconder is not yet over, the Members would also be allowed to move their amendments, if not already done, during the next part of the Session on conclusion of the speech of the seconder.

[English]

15.30 hrs.

**MOTION RE: FIRST TO THIRD REPORTS
OF THE COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE
MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS**

SHRI NIKHILANANDA SAR (Burdwan): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the First to Third Reports of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 1st, 8th and 15th March, 2000 respectively, subject to the modification that para 4 and part (ii) of para 5 of the First Report, relating to allocation of time to Resolution, be omitted."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is:

"That this House do agree with the First to Third Reports of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 1st, 8th and 15th March, 2000 respectively, subject to the modification that para 4 and part (ii) of para 5 of the First Report, relating to allocation of time to Resolution, be omitted."

The motion was adopted.

15.32 hrs.

**PRIVATE MEMBERS RESOLUTION—UNDER
CONSIDERATION**

Board for Development of Hilly Regions—Contd.

[English]

CHAIRMAN: The House would now take up further discussion on the Resolution moved by Shri Maheshwar Singh on the 10th of December, 1999.

Shri Virendra Kumar — Not present.

Shri V. Radhakrishnan — Not present.

Col. Dhani Ram Shandil

COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL (Shimla): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Resolution moved by Shri Maheshwar Singh on 10th December, 1999 regarding the constitution of a Board for development of the hilly States and hilly regions of the country, specially in the Himalayan belt so as to bring these areas at par with the developed regions of the plains in the country.

Sir, my first submission is that the hilly States and the hilly regions have some peculiar problems as a result of the terrain, as a result of the weather and because of their culture which they would like to zealously guard.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we may be a few in numbers, particularly from the State of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and the North-Eastern India and population is a criteria to establish a representation in this august House. My submission is that whatever points we aggregate here for the development of the regions, they must not remain within the confines of this august House but they may kindly find some implementation and execution.

Sir, we have to appreciate this development syndrome. It is in the broader perspective, keeping in mind the factors like the terrain, the weather and the ground realities that are found. To achieve this aim, this Board, which we have contemplated, is to be constituted. Such a Board under the Central Government should be the one having representation mainly from these hilly regions for effective implementation.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the problems or the challenges faced by these areas would be common. I feel, those problems that are there in Jammu & Kashmir may not be exactly the same in the State of Himachal Pradesh. But there would be commonality and there would be some similar kind of problems. The first and the foremost problem being faced by these people is that of communication.

Railways should be given the first and foremost importance for this. If the Budget allocation is spent properly and the approved projects are implemented in time, it will go a long way in making these areas self-reliant. Another aspect is formulation of new plans. I would particularly touch upon Himachal Pradesh. We have two narrow gauge lines, one is Kalka-Shimla and the other is Pathankot-Joginder Nager-Kalka-Shimla railway line is an historic one. This line was inaugurated by Lord Curzon, the most controversial Viceroy of his times. Not a mean feat, it had 103 tunnels and it is an engineering marvel of its time. However, whatever we saw in the beginning of the century has remained there till today. We have to think of creating new facilities in these areas.

If we connect Ghanoli and Nalagarh by a broad gauge line, it will create new avenues of employment for the youths in the area. We will have regulated markets in the area. Similarly, if we open another line beyond Joginder Nagar to Mandi in broad gauge via Bilaspur to be connected at Kiratpur, it will be very beneficial to the area. This area needs a lot of attention. When we think of these areas, we should remember that they do not have any major industries; that they do not have any infrastructure; or any development. We have to see how to look after the jobless youths of these areas and how to create employment opportunities for them. Railways will open avenues for tourism. It particularly applies to the entire Himachal Pradesh. Adventure tourism, religious and cultural tourism and all types of tourism can be very effectively planned and implemented in these areas. The second option is from Dehradun to Nahan. If this facility is extended to Nahan area, it will take care of the entire eastern belt.

We all have talk about marketing of farm produce, particularly vegetables and fruits. Floriculture is catching on now. Markets for all this produce can be planned in these areas if only we have the facility of regulated market connected with railway line. This will give a boost to the farming sector, agriculture sector and the orchards. It will make it possible to alleviate the problem of unemployment in this area.

15.39 hours

(DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEYA *in the Chair*)

In addition to railways, we have to have a very good network of roadways in these areas. I personally feel that we should give subsidies in the roadways sector. Actually speaking, all the hilly areas in the country are connected by the roadways, whether it is Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, or the North-East. We find that development can be planned very well, if we have a good network of roadways. Roadways not only help in the development of backward regions but they also connect the geo-strategic locations in these areas. At this juncture, I will touch upon Rohtang tunnel. We have witnessed the Kargil operations that took place recently.

If Rohtang tunnel was through, we would have cut down 46 kilometres of distance. So, if it is done, we would also make it an all-weather road permitting the supplies, particularly, of our Defence Services. Along with it, it would also facilitate us to place our supplies day by day well in advance, more closer to the area of strategic importance, like Kargil or the Himalayan belt. It would also facilitate us to protect them more effectively. With the upgraded and extended road and railway line, we shall have a great strategic advantage over our

adversaries. So, we must have transport subsidies. In this area, we have to have a very good network of roadways.

The second important point which this Board can attend to is on tourism with a special reference to cultural-religious tourism and adventure tourism. We have so much of scope for this, particularly in Himachal Pradesh. Starting from the mountain belts, starting from Dhauladhar ranges along the complete belt region upto Shimla, you will find muddy slopes for skiing. We have all sorts of places for adventure tourism there. For skiing, for golf or for any other type of adventurous activity, there is a complete area available. That is why, I make a suggestion that a vast network can be created there.

Similarly we can have the cultural-religious tourism. I vividly remember to what I myself saw in the Central England where a great poet of nature, William Wordsworth was born. There, I saw how beautifully those people had planned tours for the people who came as tourists. There, they have kept 15 pounds as charge for every spot. They have maintained those spots in a very well arranged manner. This way, they have alleviated the sufferings of the youth by giving them employment, small package, be it, in a small church or Cathedral. It has been kept very beautifully there. For this, they charge 15 pounds for paying a visit there. What I mean to say is that how beautifully they have arranged it.

Similarly, why can we not do it when we got so much of scope for it particularly in Himachal Pradesh where you see, every five minutes, there is a religious place? So, we should try and explore every possibility to make our tourists spots, religious spots well arranged to attract more and more tourists. This Board can very adequately do these sorts of things. Really speaking, this has a wider ramification. By doing so, we should be able to not only alleviate the sufferings of our jobless youth but also we should be able to project India as a country of religious heritage to the vast population of the world, who are so keen to see India in its real form.

Sir, we have to remember that unless we have adequate facilities to be provided to the tourists, unless they have something of interest to see, we can never hope to attract tourists, particularly the foreign tourists. Adequate facilities to tourists mean they should have a vast network of information, they should be able to have guidance available to them, and they should have proper civic amenities. Here, it is being found that there is no proper toilet facility for the tourists with the result, they cut short their tour schedule and go back. The tourists, particularly, from the advanced countries want proper

[Col. (Retd.) Dr. Dhani Ram Shandil]

facilities to be provided to them. They know that ours is a beautiful country. But if the facilities are not commensurate with the place, they leave before their schedule date. That should not happen. It is only possible if we create the atmosphere in such a way that the culture of tourism becomes a model for the whole world to follow. We have got so much of things to show. We have got so much of culture, so much of civilisation to show. There is no end to it.

After having gone through the problems of tourism, I have another factor to be discussed. In Himachal Pradesh, we have industries like HMT which is down below. We should think of setting up these sorts of eco-friendly industries in our hilly region in such a manner that they do not disturb the fragile ecology of Himalayas, that they do not disturb the forests, and that they do not disturb the environment.

Such industries which are eco-friendly like the electronics industry should be established in this region. This can be another important area of work of this Hill Board, which we are contemplating. You will find salubrious climate in our area, be it Pathankot, Kalka or Nahan. You will find that these areas are suitable for such sort of industries.

I was having a discussion with Shri Shanta Kumar and he was telling me some time back that our youth could start food processing industries involved in producing tomato puree, etc. We have plenty of potatoes and peas and they are appreciated worldwide. We have fruits and such other things in abundance but they are not channelised into small food processing industries. The investment will not be very heavy. It will come under the cottage industries sector and we will be able to give the jobless youths an opportunity to find themselves gainful employment. This is a very important thing. For example, in areas like Sirmaur, we have ginger in plenty. In Upper Shimla, we have apples. In the area of Solan and Nalagarh, we have peas and tomatoes in plenty. All these can find way into the food processing industry to become very good products which would be appreciated all over the world. If we have a proper market connected with the Railways, these products can even have an international market. But it will happen only when the Board is constituted. If the Board surveys the possibility and comes up with a scheme, we can alleviate the sufferings of our youths who are now without any job, wandering aimlessly and worrying if they can get Government jobs so that it can be said in the family that they are employed.

We should have some small stadiums for the youths to play. Though it can be contemplated at the block level, even at the district level these stadiums can be thought of by this Board. Our youth are physically sturdy. They will be able to channelise their energies and mould themselves into fine athletes. With proper coaching, they can even reach national and international levels. This is another area which can be considered by the Board that we are contemplating to constitute.

There are countless things which we can think of. There is so much of energy in Himachal Pradesh that it can mitigate its own sufferings and also give power to other parts of the country. It can become a model State. All the water and power that are available with us have got to be integrated and the Centre has to help us. If the Centre helps us and we are considered as people who have much to give to others, we can see the light of the day. We need only a little bit of support from the Centre by way of finances and subsidies. We can convert Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and the North-Eastern States as model States if that Board is constituted under Central guidance and Members representing these areas become members of that Board.

Thank you very much for giving an opportunity to speak.

[*Translation*]

SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN (Baramulla): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the resolution for constitution of a Council or board for the development of Himalayan belt and hilly regions moved by my colleague in the House.

I would like to submit in this august House that the people living in hilly regions are facing many difficulties because the Government takes too much time in responding to their problems. Undoubtedly, the Union Government has come to our rescue many a times and has been kind enough to formulate several programmes and accord legal approval to implement them. There are several such organisations which were expected to work for mitigating the problems facing the hilly regions and bring these areas at par with other developed regions of the country. However, even after setting up of so many organisations, the problems have remained unresolved because proper monitoring of development programmes could not be done. For example, an organisation is functioning to implement Border Development programme. There are other programmes as western ghat Development programme. There is North Eastern Development Council. Border area Development programme was formulated for the people of Ladakh and

other areas and it is quite appropriate. However despite the presence of so many organisations, the problems facing the Himalayas belt have not been reduced to a very large extent and too much time has since elapsed. There are three waves of civilization in our country at present. The first wave of civilization comprises of people living beyond 11 mountain ranges in the hilly regions and they remain cut off from other areas for months together. When one visits the areas of Gurej and Bagdaur by Helicopter, one can find some fortunate people living in a beautiful valley beyond 11 mountain ranges. They live in areas free from pollution and having clean and clear streams and forests. However it is their misfortune that they are unable to take bath for two months at times. It is very cold there and people spend more than seven months in freezing temperature. What is their means of livelihood? If the Military camps had not been set up in that area, the local people would have died of hunger. Same is the position in Makhil area. We reach Makhil by helicopter. If one wishes to go by road, it would take two days and the roads are in a dilapidated condition. When we make a request in this House or request those occupying Government offices to pay attention towards development of these areas, they listen to us attentively but say behind our backs that these areas are proving to be headache for them and that they would maintain the policy of listening to us and brushing the issue under the carpet.

I won't dwell at present on the measures that should be taken up in view of the present circumstances in Jammu and Kashmir. I have brought it to the notice of Hon'ble Prime Minister and our Government has reiterated that the financial package should be provided to the state at the earliest, otherwise the situation is likely to worsen even further. However, keeping aside this issue, in view of the position in Himachal Pradesh and North eastern states, I would like to request that a board or a council equipped with legal authority should be constituted at the earliest so that the representatives of those areas may sit together to find out the solution to their problems. These states may achieve the goal of self reliance and find a way to return the money received as assistance from Union Government. When we raise the problems of our areas time and again, we feel insulted when it is said that we always depend on the assistance of the Union Government. Sir, the development programmes should be implemented properly. The responsible people from these areas should be entrusted the task of looking into the problems facing Himalayan belt and proposing remedies for the betterment of these areas. Our problems vary from place to place. For instance, we are expected to construct a durable house in hilly areas in Rs. 12000 under Jawahar Rajgar Yojana. You can well imagine that in some far flung areas the amount of Rs. 12000/- is required only to transport stones for the construction of

a house. Such programmes are of no use in such areas. If one kilometer stretch of road is constructed in areas of Makhil and Tangdar, an expenditure of six to seven lakh rupees is incurred thereon whereas the same stretch of one kilometer can be constructed in plains at a total cost of fifty to sixty thousand rupees. That is why officials and journalists living in Delhi generally indulge in such talks as to what is going on in such areas and funds are being looted there. They say that funds are being flowed to Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and North Eastern regions. Very few people are aware of situation in those areas. These areas are the vital parts of our country. They are the guardians of our country. Our mountains, our forests and our people are our soldiers. Hence due attention should be paid towards the matters concerning these areas and people living there, in the interest of the nation. Immediate action should be taken in this regard.

With these words, I would like to say that the resolution moved by my friend is very significant. I hope all other Members present in the House will support it and pass it.

[English]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Mavelikara): Sir, I rise to support the Resolution moved by our hon. colleague, Shri Maheshwar Singh. The point raised in this Resolution is very valid one. Development of hilly areas is highly necessary. We have to be very clear about the constitution of the Board and its activities. That has to be discussed elaborately. India is a very beautiful country. We have hills, rivers, and forests. We have to pay more attention to the hills and mountains because of their vastness. Unfortunately, human beings are cruel to the nature. We are polluting the rivers and cutting down the trees. Due to this the forest cover is decreasing. We are polluting the mountains. We harass the people who are living in the forests. It is because of the developmental activities, even the hills are vanishing. The stone crushing activity is coming up like anything with the help of big machines. It is because of this our hills are fast vanishing. The products in the forests are taken away by other people, so the people who are inhabitants there are not able to get the benefits. Definitely, it is going to create environmental problems for us.

16.00 hrs.

Shri Prabhu, the hon. Minister of Chemicals and Fertilizers, has earlier held the Ministry of Environment. The other day he was telling us that his Ministry was opposing all new projects concerning industry. He was against some kind of industries because its developmental

[Shri Ramesh Chennethala]

activities were polluting the environment. A serious thought has to be made towards this aspect.

As my friend pointed out, Eco-friendly activities should be taken up. No development activity is taking place for the people living in forest or hilly areas. They are fully exploited by others. The produce which they are getting from the forest, is not getting a remunerative price. They are living in poverty. They do not have any infrastructure facility. There are no roads to connect them to market. Market accessibility is not there. There are no roads connecting forests and other hilly areas. There is no mode of transportation. Even now, people have to travel long distances to sell their products, as a result of this the intermediaries come in and they exploit the poor people working in these forest.

There are certain programmes to provide infrastructure facility to these areas. Construction of roads, railway line or having some other mode of transportation are a few. But it is not enough. So, proper planning should be done. Different areas may have different problems. According to the need of the area proper planning should be there. The problems faced by the people in Himalayas may not be the same as faced by the people in Western Ghats. According to the need of the area, proper planning should be done. Unfortunately, there is no planning for these areas.

I was the Minister of Rural Development in Kerala. We constructed certain houses for the people who were living in the forests. They were very reluctant to stay in those houses. The Adivasis or the tribes living in these forest areas were not ready to shift to the houses which we constructed because they were not used to stay in such houses. The houses constructed by us were still lying vacant. So, we will have to construct houses according to their culture.

[Translation]

Such houses should be constructed which are suitable for them so that they may live there. This is the biggest challenge for us. Our progress should be in accordance with our culture, however we are ignoring this aspect. I have noticed that attention is not being paid in this respect either by us or by any agency. Consequently, the gap between the rural and the urban areas and between the hilly areas and the plains is widening over the matter of development. Attention must be paid in this regard. The Union Government and State Government should consider this issue collectively. Attention should be paid towards the problem of unemployment amongst people living in hilly areas. As I stated earlier also that eco-friendly factories should be set up for the people living in hilly

areas and forest areas. More and more such development schemes should be introduced in these areas. Alongwith dairy development, the option of setting up agriculture-based industries should also be explored so that the earning of the people may increase. This proposed board should work for increasing the income of the common man living in hilly areas.

Sir, medicinal plants are found in abundance in hilly areas.

[English]

There is abundance of medicinal plants in these forests and mountains. The recent reports say that these plants are being smuggled out.

[Translation]

These plants are being smuggled. The Government should pay attention on it. An attempt is made to smuggle the medicinal plants from the Himalayan region.

[English]

We should take it up very seriously. Now, certain developed countries are trying to smuggle out these plants. They are converting them into finished goods and are selling them in developing countries. The Government of India should take this aspect very seriously.

In certain areas these tribal people are harassed by others. Those tribes who are living in these hilly and forest areas are facing a lot of hardship. We should give them some kind of protection. Most of the people are illiterate there. So, we should pay total attention on these areas. We should give more facilities for their education. We should also give more employment opportunities to them.

As you know, there are reports of deaths due to poverty in certain areas, especially in the State of Orissa. In areas like Kalahandi even now people are dying of starvation. Kalahandi, Bolangir, Koraput are the areas of poverty stricken. The spirit of the Bill is that we should give more importance to these hilly areas. So, I welcome the suggestion for constituting a board to look into the various developmental activities in the hilly areas so that there could be equilibrium in regard to development. There will be total harmony in these areas, through equitable development.

[Translation]

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Mr. Chairman, Sir, Hon'ble Member, Shri Maheshwar Singh has moved

a very important resolution in the House for consideration. I welcome this resolution.

Sir, Hilly regions constitute a major part of our country. The people living in these regions are very simple and prepared to make sacrifices for the country, however those in Delhi and running the affairs of states to not pay attention towards hilly regions. The civilization in these areas was quite advanced and peaceful due to which there was no crime and wrongdoings. They were leading a civilized life. But the people in the hilly areas also get affected when they came in contact with the urban people. We should try to maintain the special features of their culture. Besides development, we have to keep their traditions alive. They are closer to nature. We should conserve nature as the life of these people depends on it. Those running the country should realise that if the so called civilized people keep on damaging the mountains and felling trees, the greenery and the mountains will be wiped out. If we cannot protect environment, the climate will also change and that will be harmful for our environment. Hence an integrated approach should be adopted in this regard.

What was achieved through 50 years of planning? We should consider as to how the hilly regions can be developed fully without causing any harm to its environment. We have to think whether the schemes formulated for them are helpful in improving the life of people living in hilly regions. We should think about bringing improvement in their life. Man should work in harmony with nature to make progress. We have provided such facilities as post offices for them and we are acting as guardians for the people living in those areas but even then we do not pay attention towards their actual needs. We should formulate schemes as per their requirement. We should seek their concurrence while drawing up the plans for them.

I have noticed that discontentment is prevalent in all the hilly areas due to apathy shown in the last fifty years. The people living in hilly areas are very simple. They are truthful and protectors of environment. However there is resentment amongst them against our governance. (*Interruptions*) Resentment is there in Jharkhand as well. Dissatisfaction is on the rise in all the hilly regions. So long as proper attention is not paid towards the reasons due to which the problems of people in hilly regions have remained unresolved, the future of these people as well as the country will not become bright.

Several facilities have been provided in hilly regions including the facility of education. I am not saying that nothing has been done there. But the benefits of progress have reached only a few people. Only 10-20% persons

have been benefited whereas 80% people remain deprived of these facilities. Our former Prime Minister had commented that only 15 paise out of a rupee trickle in the villages and reach the poor. Very little benefits of development percolate to the hilly areas. Those in charge of development and so called civilized people derive benefits of development. As my friend Shri Ramesh has also stated that the middlemen deceive these poor people and make a fortune by misappropriating funds. The nation should pay due attention towards people of hilly regions. Resentment amongst these people gives rise to terrorism. We shall have to find the reasons for resentment and evolve a consensus as to how we can work for their welfare. It would be futile to instigate them. Sometimes the political parties instigate them to gain political mileage, however, while doing so, they fail to realise that they may be out of the power at present but they will have to face the consequences if they come to power in future. Once the people are led astray, it becomes very difficult to bring them round. It is possible that such tactics are adopted to create trouble for the party in power, however it will turn out to be a troublesome issue even when that party comes to power. Such a situation has been created in the country in the last 50 years. It has been observed that alongwith the rise in educational status, aspirations begin to soar in the middle class people. They want roads in hilly areas and when they become aware, they want participation in decision making. Their desire for participation grows. They want participation in governance. We should evaluate it properly. They should be involved in this process. We should consider the issue of providing them their due share. Such sentiments should be respected and we should work sincerely to give them their due share. For this purpose, autonomy can be granted. However, if separate states are continued to be carved out in the country, our country would suffer. The Government may grant regional autonomy. They should be given due representation in governance and there should be no intervention which may give rise to resentment and thus we can check this tendency. Hence we should think about granting regional autonomy to them. We shall have to prepare an economic package. Financial assistance can be provided for their traditional planning.

Alongwith with it we can also impart our technology to them. Our mission is a technical one and the technology transfer should be its prime job. If the useful technology is provided in the hilly areas, they can be developed and can make progress at their own.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, people of hilly areas fall ill quite frequently. Many such diseases afflict them due to the consumption of non iodized salt. Government can help them by making available such things of necessity. There

[Shri Hannan Mollah]

is also a shortage of drinking water in hilly areas, so people often suffer from hilly diarrhoea. The water in hills is often replete with natural minerals, so a comprehensive project will have to be started for purifying the water so that the people could be helped in this regard. Different set of problems may be present in different hilly areas, hence it is necessary to formulate projects according to the situation and the problem afflicting a particular area. Preparing plans at Delhi and sending it there for execution is not going to work. The development of the areas can take place only if the plans are formulated keeping in view the areas of the people. Besides, many tribal areas are also there in hills. There is provision for sub-plan budgetary allocation for these areas. It is my submission to the Government that the money allocated for these areas, should be utilised properly.

We can move our country towards development by providing regional autonomy and by inculcating the spirit of democracy in the people and by bringing the alienated people back to the mainstream of the country. Some people are in the habit of belittling the tribals of the hills. This tendency of hegemony will have to be curbed by the persons of developed areas. We can make progress only if we give equal status and respect to the culture, dialect and education of the tribals. I hope that the hon. Minister of Tourism will formulate some programme for developing the tourism sector there which in turn would result in the economic development. Alongwith it, there should be inter-communicability for exchanging the views and sentiments of the people of hilly areas and the rest of the country. It can strengthen our unity. We can make progress only by promoting and strengthening the tradition of unity in diversity. With the hope that the Government will do this job, I conclude.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Chairman, Sir, hon. Member Shri Maheshwar Singh has done a commendable job in bringing the resolution and I expect that the Government will accept it. The hills and the hills people have been inalienable part of Indian culture. It has been mentioned in our ancient scriptures and sastras that Bholanath (Lord Shiva) had his abode in mountains. All the famous pilgrim centres like Kedarnath, Badrinath etc. are situated in the hills. In the past, during the war time warriors used to take resort in hills. They were brave people. They made the hills their permanent place of living in the process of staying there. This way we came to know that the people are living even in the hills. The ancestors of persons of hilly areas were brave people. They came to stay in hilly areas in the process of fighting against the monarchy. Such great is the expansion of Northern Himalayas that the people of Jammu and Kashmir to the Burma border in North East have been living there. Many a people visited the

pilgrimage shrines and opened some paths in the process of going there and coming back but the common man living in these areas are a deprived lot and are facing all kinds of difficulties. It is the policy of the Government to provide special facilities and privileges in the backward areas and to bring back such areas to the mainstream of the country. A large areas of the country which is hilly is being neglected by the Government in all respects as the problems of plains are different from the problems of hilly areas. Hence the proposal of setting up a Hill Areas Development Board is worthy of acceptance. Why has it not been accepted so far, I do not know.

A proposal for creating a separate state by the name of Utrakhand was brought but I do not know whether such a State would be created or not during the tenure of the Government. Devegowadaji too had made many promises for creating Utrakhand.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Now, even the creation of Vananchal is on the cards.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: You better listen first. Hence Utrakhand should be created at the earliest and Haridwar and Udham Singh Nagar which is a punjabi dominated area should also be included in it. Why political bickerings are taking place in Udham Singh Nagar. Majority of those in Udham Singh Nagar are in favour of remaining in Uttar Pradesh and not in Utrakhand, then you let them to remain in Uttar Pradesh. Why to impose anything and separate that part of the land, when they are not willing to be a part of the proposed new state. Why do you want to impose your will upon them. Utrakhand should be created. It is a different matter. But development Board should be constituted for the development of entire hilly areas. The proposal brought by hon. Members is very appropriate and worth acceptance by the Government. There is a problem of transport in the hills. When it is hot in the plains, it is cooler out there in hilly areas. That is why the Britishers chose Shimla in Himachal Pradesh as their summer capital. But now that the Britishers have left... (Interruptions)

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Now that the Britishers have left, rich Indians enjoy the luxuries in Shimla.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: As there are not many places in hills where the facilities are available, hence this resolution was needed to be brought. There is the problem of drinking water in the hills. Hilly areas are neglected in all spheres i.e. housing, education etc. Though there are springs in the hilly areas yet water is not worth drinking everywhere. The holy rivers like Ganga, Bhagirathi, Alkananda, etc. originated from the mountain

but they are being polluted today. As all the rivers originate from the mountains, hence we cannot sustain ourselves by neglecting the hilly areas. Hilly areas are significant from the point of view of tradition, culture, history, and economics. Herbs also grow on hills. Saffron, musk etc. is also produced in hills. You can take the example of Ladakh. The Pashmina wool used to make pashmina woollen cloth is derived not from a sheep but from a goat which is an inhabitant of 8000 feet height. The hair of that goat is comparatively longer. Its skin has a coating of silky smooth fur. Approximately 200 grams of Pashmina is collected from a goat by combing that coating. Earlier, I was under the impression that Pashmina is derived from a sheep and that is why it is so smooth. But it is collected from a goat which is found in Laddakh. High quality Marino sheep rearing is done in Kashmir from which very soft wool is obtained. Hence from every point of view, the neglect of hills is a loss to the country. It leads to regional imbalance. The people living in hilly areas consider themselves a part of India but when their development is neglected, they are forced to consider themselves useless and insignificant. This kind of regional imbalance also threatens the national unity and integrity. Hence the resolution brought forward by the hon. Member is also a step for promoting national unity. Hence the Government should accept this resolution so that backward and neglected region of India may get the message that this Government, system and society is trying to bring them back to the mainstream. They should be assured about it. It will strengthen the national integrity, boost the moral of the people living in border areas and instil a feeling of patriotism in them. Hence, it is very important from the security point of view of the country. I have not the opportunity to visit the north-east areas and Badrinath, Kedarnath, Jammu and Kashmir and Srinagar also. During my visits, I noticed the problems existing in these areas. Transportation of foodgrains is very difficult in hilly areas. Roads are blocked there due to snow fall. The area remain cut-off from other parts of the country for 6 months. How will people get foodgrains during these months? Foodgrains cannot be cultivated there. If somewhere levelled land is found it caters to the need of foodgrains to a small extent. Otherwise, foodgrains have to be transported from plains for 6 months. In some areas sheeps are also used for transporting the 5-10 kgs. of foodgrains to hilly areas.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Food security is our prime problem and we have resolved to provide food security to each and every part of our country. Public life gets affected for six months in some parts of Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir due to snowfall. Therefore, ration for 6 months have to be transported there in advance. If State Government demand foodgrains, Union Government

insists on cash payment. But State Government does not have funds to pay cash price. Therefore, Central Government should provide foodgrains to them on loan basis.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Himachal Pradesh is a backward, and neglected state in respect of food, education, clothing, housing, medical care and transport facilities etc. Therefore, a separate development Board should be constituted to provide all these facilities in Himachal Pradesh. Their problems are different from the problems of plains. Therefore, by constituting a separate development board for the hilly regions and by granting adequate funds to them problems of hilly areas can be resolved.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, our friend was talking about Purvanchal. Just now, he is not present in the House, perhaps he has left. I want that development should take place in hilly areas. Deforestation in hilly areas is affecting plains. It is the cause of frequent inundation. Due to soil erosion and land sliding, soil from the hilly areas flows to rivers in plains. Consequently, rivers in the plains are becoming shallow, and floods in these rivers are creating havoc in plains. Therefore, maintaining ecological balance, protecting forests and checking deforestation could help in the development of hilly and under developed areas. For maintaining ecological balance, eco-friendly policies should be adopted. People are inhabited in 300-400 kms. in the interior of high mountains of Arunachal Pradesh, North-eastern states, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and in various areas of Himalaya. They are facing many problems. A separate board should be constituted for their development. Therefore, we support the resolution presented in the House by hon'ble Member Shri Maheshwar Singh.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Shri Maheshwar Singh belongs to the ruling party and we are in the opposition. Even then we support the resolution presented by him. So what is the problem before the Government to approve the resolution when opposition members are supporting it inspite of the fact that it has been brought by a member of the ruling party. My submission is that Government should pass the resolution. They should not think that the member has brought a private resolution, therefore, Government should not approve it or the Minister should not accept the proposal given by a member. When we all are unanimous on this resolution and would like the board to be constituted for the development of hilly areas, then the Government should not have any problem to approve it. Government should not take it as a prestige issue that it should not accept the proposal given by a member. If a parliamentarian gives a valuable suggestion and opposition approves it, Government should not be

[Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

abstinate rather it should accept the proposal. How the funds will be arranged, how its office etc. will be set up—these are the issues which can be decided later by discussion after the constitution of the board.

Mr Chairman, Sir, as has been demanded that a board should be constituted for the development of hilly areas, creation of Jharkhand state was also been demanded. Member of Parliament Shri B.K. Dev from Vananchal regions has left the House. I would like to mention that earlier Bihar, Orissa and Bengal were part of a single state, however, in 1912 Bengal, in 1937 Orissa were created as two separate States. Since 1912 to 1937, Bihar and Orissa remained as a single state. During this period, Britishers found out that creation of a separate Jharkhand state is not profitable rather this area will be destroyed. The demand for Jharkhand State was present during British rule also but keeping in view all the things, they did not create a separate state. A detailed discussion was held on this issue in Constituent Assembly also. Many patriots and great leaders were present in that Assembly and they also found that creation of a Jharkhand state in Bihar would not be beneficial rather it would be harmful for the Jharkhand region. At that time our first Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and then late Shrimati Indira Gandhi also considered it and found that the demand of separate Jharkhand state is not justified. It is neither in the interest of our country nor in the interest of Bihar and even for Jharkhand area it is not beneficial to create a separate state. The Hon'ble Member from Himachal Pradesh is not demanding a separate state, they are demanding a separate development board which is justified. The constitution of development board will assure the people of hilly areas that they are also included in the mainstream of our country. I would like to mention regarding the Purvanchal states that creation of separate states in North-East has not helped in resolving the problems there. 7 states were created there but the development could not take place there rather it proved harmful...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMTAHAL CHOUDHARI (Ranchi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, while inviting the attention of the hon'ble Member towards Punjab, I would like to state the commendable progress has taken place in Haryana since it has been segregated from Punjab...*(Interruptions)*

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Punjab was already flourishing and so was Haryana. It flourished more after segregating from Punjab. That's why I am saying...*(Interruptions)* Why are you being aggressive...*(Interruptions)* The opposition is ready to support the Government to include the people of backward areas, adivasis, banvasis, harijans and girjans in the mainstream who have been left behind. However, at the very mention of poor people, they become aggressive.

We observed it in yesterday's discussion on general budget. They did not answer any of the question regarding the poor people. How the people who are having links with CII and FICCI will think about the problems of poor people of hilly regions. Only the wearer knows where the shoe pinches. They can not understand the agony of the harijans, girjans, adivasis and banvasis. They never care about the backward areas, to lay a railway line there or to construct a road so as to assure the people of backward areas that they are also included in the mainstream of the country. They do not pay attention to provide education facilities there...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Mavelikara): They did not hear what Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav said.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: They did not listen. Foodgrains should be provided there on loan basis. Most of the people in hilly areas are living below the poverty line. Sources of income are very few there. When the goods are transported from plains, their prices increase because of higher cost of transportation. He has started the programme to provide foodgrains to poor people. He was the Minister at that time. The benefits which were given to poor people have been withdrawn by him by increasing the prices. At that time also the people in the finance department were committing gross irregularities. Who is there to listen to the problems of the poor in finance department? They have estimated that rupees five thousand crore will be required. I want to ask whether rupees five thousand crores is a big amount for the country? The non-performing assets have reached up to Rs. 98 thousand crores which has been written off as bad debt. Rupees thirty thousand crores were outstanding against members of CII. The eminent people in the CII determine the economic terms. The people like Rahul Bajaj and Singhania are the people who know economics and who dictate economic terms...*(Interruptions)* They will sanction when all the things are impressed upon them otherwise everything will remain the same...*(Interruptions)* Therefore, I request the government that any proposal moved by any member which is beneficial for the poor and is for their development should be accepted and action should be taken thereon. The government should not say that how can we accept it. First they will listen to us and then say that you withdraw it we will take care of it. Has there been any such precedent? You should ponder over it. There is no need to consult all the people if you are doing a good work. I would like to say that a Development Board should be set up for the development of hill region. I once again thank Shri Maheshwar Singh for moving this proposal. There are some people in that party who think about the poor people and neglected

think about the poor people and neglected regions. Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, therefore, we will extend our full support for the causes of the poor and we will strongly oppose those who are committing irregularities and we will not allow them to function.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, the Himalayas have been guarding our country since the time immemorial and therefore in the patriotic songs the name of Himalays is referred to with great respect.

16.39 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the chair*]

Uttar mein rakhwali karta parvatraj virat hai" with this line of a poem. The great poet Jai Shankar Prasad had written following lines about the Himalayas "Himalaya ke Angan mein, use de partham kiron ka uphar, usha ne kiya hans abhinandan pahnaya heerak haar." The sun rises in the East in India. When the rays of the sun falls on the snow covered peaks of the Himalayas it appears that they adorn our motherland like a garland and Himalayas look like a crown on the head of the mother India which protect this country like a sword and shield.

Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, about India it is said.

[*English*]

India is the cradle of nature.

[*Translation*]

Nature has abundently gifted this land. On the one hand we have mighty peaks of Himalayas like Mount Everest which is the highest peak in the world, the Gaurishanker peak besides we have sacred lush green plains of the Ganga and Yamuna the Thar Desert of Rajasthan coastal planes and western and eastern ghats. We have geographical diversities. Sitting here we cannot treat every one on an equal footing as that will not be beneficial. Therefore, we will have to keep in view the geographical situations while treading our country on the path of progress. Sir, this is what I want to say through you.

It is a matter of pleasure that Shri Maheshwar Singh has moved a resolution in the House to constitute a board for the all round development of the hilly states and region particularly Himalayan region so these regions can be brought at par with the developed regions in the plains. I whole heartedly support this resolution and request the government that due attention should be paid

towards the development of the hilly region so that the people of these regions could be brought at par with the people of plains and they could join the main stream of the country and feel a part of it and they could also contribute in the development of the country.

The source of the Gangotri and Yamunotari is in Himalayas. The hon'ble member who spoke before me was referring to the Badrinath and Kedarnath. We the Indian people believe in existence of 'God' in every particle of the earth. Our sages went to hills and meditated in the lap of the nature and made their life worthwhile. The Himalayas, which have guarded northern frontiers of our country from time immemorial, today constitutes the entire Himalayan region, from Kashmir to Tripura which include Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Meghalaya, Northern part of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim along with Terai region of hilly area including Utrakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir is demanding from crores of Indian people that what have you done for me while I am guarding you since ages. Therefore, it is the sacred duty of the country to actually constitute a board for the development of these hilly regions.

About our country a poet said:

"Arun yah madhumaya Desh Hamara
jahan pahunch anjan chhitiz ko milta ek sahara."

Ours is a unique country full of life giving force. The Himalayas and the hilly regions are like the crown of motherland and so long as these areas are not developed and made prosperous our country will be bereft of its glory. Therefore, for the development of hilly areas particularly as you have mentioned about the development of Himachal Pradesh, undoubtedly Himachal Pradesh should be developed but the development board should be constituted for the development of the entire hilly region right from Jammu and Kashmir to Tripura.

Hon'ble Sir, the State Governments have limited resources due to which they are unable to fulfill the aspirations and hopes of the people of the hilly regions and the hilly regions are not developed upto the desired extent. The Union Government have enormous resources and the government have formulated the programmes like Hill Area Development Programme, the Western Ghat Development Programme, The North East Council, the Border Development Programme, The Desert Development Programme, The Drought Prone Area Development Programme etc. But different criteria have been adopted while formulating these programmes keeping in view the different geographical condition of the respective regions. I would like to draw the attention of the House towards

[Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat]

Road, Presidents House at Delhi to Riwari in Haryana and Ahirwar near Alwar touches Ajmer, Merwar, Abu, Kota, Udaipur, Mewar, Chittor, Dungepur, Banswara and upto Gujarat. Earlier the area of Aravali hills was covered with forest but now it has been denuded. But this area still has mineral deposits. Mineral deposits could not be exploited to the desired extent. Proper attention has not been paid towards the development of this area by setting up industries based on minerals available there so that local people could get employment. Recently a discussion was held on Vindhyaçal area and Jharkhand region of Bihar. It is not proper to turn down the demand of setting up a branch of post office or bank in any hilly region on the ground that it would not be economical or viable. The entire development work will come to stand still if such plea is given that the area has not required population to open a post office or it has a very low income. The criteria fixed for JRY, PM's Swaran Jayanti Gramodaya Yojana, Swarna Jayanti Vikas Yojana and other such schemes is that the grants would be given on the basis of population of that area. Hilly regions do not fulfil that criteria and thus development work could not be taken up there. Sir, through you, I would like to draw your attention towards another point that earlier hilly regions were divided in two categories. First was the special category states which covered Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. Under this category these states were provided 90 per cent central assistance for developmental works and remaining 10 per cent in the form of loan. Hilly regions of the remaining states were brought under Hilly Area Development Programme and under that scheme 30 per cent funds for developmental projects were provided as Central assistance and 70 per cent in the form of loan. The areas of Uttaranchal hilly regions of eastern and western ghats and northern areas were covered under it. But Ninth Finance Commission withdrew all these facilities and introduced uniform policy for all the regions. As a result of it development has become a serious problem for hilly regions. I feel that in view of geographical diversity of the areas union government should provide special assistance for development of hilly regions. Imbalanced development of any area causes discontentment and resentment among youths which ultimately leads to the problem of extremism and terrorism. This is the main reason for prevailing terrorism and feeling of secession in north-eastern region. The problem of Kashmir and in other certain areas is also because of such imbalanced development. It is located in a difficult geographical condition and has mountains all around. It has scattered

population. During rainy season heavy rain causes the problems of flood and land-slide. Cultivable land of hilly regions get damaged and farmers suffer heavily. In winter season, mountains are covered with snow. These people are engaged in rearing cattle and they have to take them away during winter session. They return to their homes after several months. Such are the difficulties the people are facing there. The area of mountainous region is quite vast but is sparsely populated. These areas do not have connecting roads. It is really difficult to construct roads in those areas. Rural areas lack connectivity so it is essential to construct roads there. People of hilly regions have limited sources of income. They are simple people and preserved their culture. Human values are still maintained there. I hope that while preserving their culture, way of their life style and other values of life, the Government will pay attention towards the development of those areas. Protection of forest wealth and wild life will be taken care of while starting new hydro power projects. Apples are grown in large quantity in Himachal Pradesh and jhoom cultivation is done in Arunachal Pradesh. New techniques should be adopted to increase their production. If floriculture, horticulture, poultry farms and fisheries are started there, the economy of those regions will be strengthened. The means of transport are limited and railway lines are very few. There is still narrow gauge line between Shimla and Kalka whereas narrow gauge throughout the country with the introduction on unigauge system. But narrow gauge is still in Himachal Pradesh. Similarly, in Jammu and Kashmir rail line is only upto Jammu and Kathua. Now National Democratic Alliance government has been formed under the leadership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and I hope that the Government would constitute a board for the all round development of the Himalayan region upto North-East.

The Aravali Development Board should be constituted in Rajasthan on the lines of Telangana Development Board, Mewar Development Board and recently constituted board for Jharkhand by according special status to it. A separate Development Board should be set up for Ajmer. Ajmer was a union territory upto 1956. This is a hilly region. 5 to 6 members of almost every family serve the Armed forces. Being a hilly region, area under cultivation is quite small and people have to suffer due to drought, famine and heavy rains. Therefore, Mogra-Merwara Development Board should be set up for the backward hilly regions of Khairwara, Salumbar and Chittor. Aravali Development Board should also be constituted for Rajasthan. After that schemes should be formulated for development of the area and sufficient funds should be allocated. Forests containing fruit trees and other good quality trees should be developed there for the overall progress of this area.

With these words I whole heartedly support the resolution presented here by Shri Maheshwar Singh. I would request the Government to take necessary action so that the people of hilly regions may not feel aloof, discriminated and neglected and they may mix themselves with the rest of the country like the mixture of milk and water. There should be a feeling to live for others. There is an urgent need to set up a Hilly Development Board and Himachal Development Board for balanced progress of the nation.

In the meeting of National Development Council a decision was taken in 1983 to evolve a policy for National Himalayan Development Board. Later on a committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of the member of Planning Commission Shri S.J. Kasim and it was named as North-Western Himalayan Council. But we do not know as to what happened to its report. Hon'ble Minister is present here and perhaps he may have that report. I request him that in his reply he should tell about the recommendations of this council. I would request that the National Himalayan Development Board should be constituted. I feel that development of the hilly areas can be done only by setting up hydro-power projects and developing forests. With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Mr. Chairman Sir, this resolution, as moved by our distinguished colleague, Shri Maheshwar Singh, deserves the support of the entire House. I personally thank him for his brilliant concept in the given context of the regional development programme and plan, especially in the hilly regions.

Sir, any Indian who thinks of India in terms of philosophy, in terms of its spiritual identity, in terms of its cultural heritage and in terms of its religious identity, knows that the mountains of the hilly areas of this great country figure greatly in the pages of literature, history and geography. Be it the *Vedas*, be it the *Upanishadas*, be it the *Quran*, be it the *Ramayana* or be it the *Mahabharata*, all the best works of Indian philosophy, life, truth and truth with experiment, right from the days of *munis* and *rishis* down to Mahatama Gandhi, also figure the eternal concept of mountains and beyond mountains.

Tagore used to say, "When I go to the mountains or the hills, I feel that I am one with the Universe". The whole concept of Indian Philosophy centres around the hills and the mountains. People who live there are not only the citizens of this country, but they also carry the heritage of thousands of years, which no historian can account for. You cannot compare them with Indraprashta

or Lucknow or Kolkata because their wisdom is incomparable and they have seen the dawn of earlier civilisations. In our ancient literature, we find such instances where these mountains or the hills are a witness to the dialogue held with the Sun or communication with the Moon or the dream songs about the sea and so on. The border areas, be it in the Himalayan range or in the Northern parts of our country or in Jammu and Kashmir or in Himachal Pradesh, are not only precious, but also beautiful and peaceful. We now think that the time has come when we should do justice and pay our full attention of this Resolution brought by Shri Maheshwar Singh.

I remember today the great son of this country who said, "I may be a small man from the hills, the representative of a poor family, may not have been properly educated, may not have been an athlete who participated either at Athens or Moscow or Rome Olympics, but I have the desire and the determination to reach the Everest Peak". That was Tenzing Norgay from Darjeeling, who tried to reach the summit of Mount Everest year after year and who finally reached the summit of Mount Everest taking the whole world by surprise. At the instance of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Dr. B.C. Roy, accorded a special status to him by making him a Minister in his Government. Tenzing Norgay conveyed the message to the world that the people from the hills, though deprived of everything, can do wonders.

Now, I take the name of another great man from the North-Eastern Region, who was the first person to hoist the Indian National Flag during the freedom struggle. It was Tiao of Nagaland.

I have gone through the books of Tagore a bit. Tagore used to say, "When I feel like concentrating or when I feel for the whole Universe, beyond the territory or the periphery of India, I feel that I should go to the hills or the sea". That is why, I am describing it in this way. These hilly areas should not be treated just like other areas. If you go through Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's "Discovery of India", you will hear the echoes of mountains in terms of brotherhood, humanity, God, inspiration etc.

This is an important Resolution and the entire House should draw the attention of the Government towards it. You know about the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, which is located in Darjeeling. Year after year, people go there for training and to fulfil the dream of Tenzing Norgay. This Institute has produced brilliant boys and girls who went on to scale Nanda Devi and other peaks and proved that they are no less than the experts.

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dismunsi]

17.00 hrs.

Sir, this Himalayan Mountaineering Institute now requires support, especially from the Government, for their expansion programme.

Sir, yesterday when I was coming to Parliament I had the opportunity to meet another great son of the Darjeeling hills, Shri Subhas Gheising. I asked him as to why he was coming to Parliament. He said, 'I just met the hon. Prime Minister and told him that I have not taken arms in my hands; I have not indulged in any violence and I have not confronted the Government of India constitutionally. I just want to fulfil the limited aspirations of my hill people'.

Sir, the late Rajiv Gandhi, the then Chief Minister of West Bengal and myself were a party to arriving at a compromise formula for constitution of a Hill Council in Darjeeling. There was an agreement then that this Accord would be reviewed from time to time. I am setting up my Committee. But it was a Tripartite Committee at that time and the agreement was reached in a tripartite negotiation. I drew the attention of the hon. Prime Minister and told him that the time has come to think as to what is happening in Darjeeling.

Sir, as we all know, after the terrorist activities gained momentum in the State of Jammu & Kashmir, the tourists have only a limited option to choose either from Himachal Pradesh or Darjeeling for their tourism purposes. Darjeeling has got the highest load of tourists in the last few years, particularly during the days of terrorists activities in Jammu & Kashmir, which is still continuing.

Sir, Shri Gheising told me that he is unable to take care of the visiting tourists, he is unable to look after them and was pondering as to why the tourists are coming there. India is having such great natural scenic treasures and this is envied by some nations of the world. We have certain traditionally best things. What are they? One of them is the 'Surya pranam'. The people in the world feel that the best place to see the sun rise is at the peak of Kanchanjunga in Darjeeling. People throughout the world want to see the sun rise in the Indian soil, from the peak of Kanchanjunga in Darjeeling.

Sir, once an American tourist was questioned, 'why do you not see it in Europe? Why do you not see it in Africa? Why do you not see it in your own country? He said-it was a very great world for India—to see the sun rise in a place other than Kanchanjunga hill would mean not seeing at all the dawn of the civilization'. This is the kind of message that this place has been carrying for years. Darjeeling is one of the prime zones of tourist attraction.

Sir, when I came to Parliament for the first time in the Fifth Lok Sabha, I was inspired by the then Chairman-whom I still regard not merely as a politician, but as an historian, as a poet and a philosopher- of the Public Accounts Committee, Prof. Hiren Mukherjee. He told me, 'Priya, accompany me, we would be visiting Nathula hill top to inspect Defence accounts'. When we reached there, some military officers came and told us that after certain heights we have to come down.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The time allotted for this Bill was upto 5.03 hours which is over now. If the House agrees, time can be further extended by 45 minutes.

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGAR BWISWMUTHIARY (Kokrajhar): Sir, time should be extended by one hour. This Bill should be passed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: With the consent of the House time is extended by 45 minutes.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, I would be concluding my speech very quickly.

Sir, when Prof. Hiren Mukherjee took me to the hills-I must congratulate Shri George Fernandes, he is heading Defence Ministry now—during those days, during the days of the Fifth Lok Sabha, I found that most constructive and wonderful work was being done—that was immediately after the Chinese aggression—by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO), possibly under the Ministry of Defence, if I am not mistaken. They were doing such a good infrastructural job. When I asked them if the same thing could be expected to be done in Darjeeling as well, they said that their first priority was Nathula and then they would go to other places. At that time I felt that the Ministry of Defence, through its agencies could specially take care not only of the Defence needs of the country but also could contribute in infrastructural development in those far reaching hilly areas like Nathula, Gangtok, Darjeeling and in some parts of Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and also, if I am not mistaken, certain parts in the small hill peaks of Assam.

I believe, all these problems have led Shri Maheshwar Prasad Singh to table this Resolution.

What happens with the normal Plan allocations? Please do not misunderstand me. Do not think that I am trying to score political points. In the Plan allocation given to a State which has hill areas in it, it is in the nature

of the leaders of the plains to see that a substantial part of the allocation or diversion is executed among the constituencies of important political leaders in the plains. Only the leftovers go to the hills. When the leftovers are sent to the hill areas, they are sent proportionate to the allocation for the plains. Ultimately, it becomes maningless.

When Gorkha Land agitation was going on, I was a Minister in the Union Government. Rajivji sent me on an eight-day tour to observe the life in hills and to see as to what the parity in hill areas is. I submitted my report to Rajivji. Then I understood that if I spend a certain amount of money on food and shelter in plains, I would spend four times more than that amount in hills for the same purpose. You can imagine the plight of people living in hill areas. My expenditure on LPG in Kalka differs vastly from my expenditure on LPG in, say, Manali. Firstly, LPG is not available in many hill areas. Where it is available, after adding the cost of transportation, it becomes much costlier than it is in plains. People living in hill areas cannot use fuel wood because of various restrictions related to protection of forest wealth. They cannot use LPG because of the high price. Where will they go? That was why, Rajivji advised the Planning Department and other Departments that separate priority should be given to hill areas in terms of parity.

The first casualty in hill areas is the health. Nothing worth the name of treatment is available in the distant hills. But, still the people living in hills feel happy thinking that they are nearer to God. They feel that if anything happens to them they will reach God quicker than the people in the plains. We cannot expect in the hills the type of treatment we get in the plains. I cannot explain the dangerous situations created by landslides. If the first problem is health, the second problem is non-availability of drinking water. In the last two months, Kurseong and Kalimpong have faced the worst possible crises of non-availability of drinking water. When you travel for an hour and come down to Silchar and Jalpaiguri, you find water everywhere. While people were misusing water everywhere, in some areas of Kurseong and Kalimpong people could not get a glass of drinking water. These landslides strike Himachal Pradesh during monsoons. Shri Shanta Kumar had been the Chief Minister of that State. He must be knowing Lata Thakur, a girl from Himachal Youth Congress. I was the President of Youth Congress then. This girl met with an accident. I got the news next day that she fell from her car. When I went there I was told that these things happen during every monsoon. Vehicles cannot be repaired during monsoon. Since contractors do not get payment in time, they also delay the works. The common men become the victims of all this. Once I was stranded between Kurseong and Jalpaiguri because of a landslide. I found that the whole administration was sitting helpless because they were not

able to pay the contractors' bills in time as they did not have money. Contractors were bargaining with the administration saying that till their dues were paid they would not send the contract labour to clear the roads.

This went on for nearly two hours. Luckily, at the time some military convoy which was coming, on their own, rescued the villagers and saved the situation. The jawans came and cleared the roads. But it is not happening every time that the jawans will come. Therefore, landslide is a major problem being faced by the people.

Apart from the tea plantation, we have best fruits like orange, apple, naashpati being grown there in our region. We have the best tea from Darjiling. Mr. Chairman, Sir, when I was the Minister of Commerce, once I visited Germany to sell Indian tea. The question came to me: "Mr. Minister, have you brought 'Darjiling tea'? I felt so proud when representatives from Sri Lanka, Africa, and other countries of the world asked me if I have brought the 'Darjiling tea'. They told me that they always tried to find 'Darjiling tea' in their markets. The name 'Darjiling' has become famous for its tea. It has been possible due to the toiling commitment of the workers of that hill. The best quality of the tea of the world, the 'Darjiling tea' is the contribution of the hill people. But look at the faith of these tea gardens! The workers are not being paid properly. Hill men or women have no other source of income. They depend only on the mercy of the owners. But the owners get changed their management year after year for frauding the banks or otherwise, and the best image of tea of India, 'Darjiling tea' is getting an assault year after year.

Sir, the best quality timbers are coming from the hill areas of India. But we have no special approach to control the environmental system, to maintain the ecological balance between the plane and hill. Our forests, timber gardens, tea plantations, fruit plantations are one of the best in the country. We can be proud of that. After getting suffocated in the pollution of Delhi, if I go and spend time in the guest house of Shri Shanta Kumar, I will not only get the hospitality but also I may grow in life for another 10 to 15 years because the environment is so clean.

Shri Maheshwar Singh's resolution will ensure the guarantee of future of India. The time has come to do it. Whether the Congress could not do or somebody else could not do it, let us criticise it in the election meetings and not here. But here, let the Parliament respond and let the Government respond because the time has come for a National Hill Development Council where a separate planned approach is to be given for the all-round development.

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dismunsi]

Be it in education, the best students of Bengal do not come from Gwalior School. The best students of Bengal come from the North point school of Darjiling. There, parents try for months together saying 'Should our son get a chance there'? Such is the best standard they have set up though their capacity is limited.

Therefore, Sir, I convey through you to the Government that I am no less than our distinguished Defence Minister whose most of the time is spent taking care of the army in this front. He has his best practical experience and he knows how the civilians suffer in the hill areas, because he witnesses them every day, every week and every month. He can respond to it on behalf of the Government in a most constructive manner. The distinguished Minister Shri Shanta Kumar is also present here. He knows the problem of the people of the hill States because he himself hails from a hill State.

Sir, I have till now discussed about the hill pockets of a State. Now, I will take one to two minutes to discuss about the hill State itself. I personally feel that if the allocation for Punjab is Rs. 10 crore, the allocation for Himachal Pradesh should be three times than that of Punjab. It is because, in plane you can exploit every thing but in hills you simply cannot. You just cannot because you are so helpless.

Now, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Defence Minister only on one point, and if I am wrong, I shall withdraw my words. If I am misleading, I shall apologise. In the Ranthan base of Rajasthan there is a tiger reserve forest. It is not a hilly pocket but it is part-linked with the environment and ecology. The hon. President of the United States of America is paying a visit to India and India will certainly accord a warm welcome to him. But I am told that, for him seven helipads are being planned to be erected in the tiger reserve forests of Ranthan base of Rajasthan which is threatening the tigers and other wild lives.

If it is incorrect, I withdraw. If it is correct, I think, enough care should be taken to see that the wildlife establishments are not disturbed.

I request through you that this National Hill Development Council, if it is formed by the Government should take care of the cultural, linguistic and ethnic identities of the hilly areas in such a manner that the people there feel that the people living in both the plains and the hills are floating in the same great stream called India.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE (Pandharpur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, how the justice is done to the people of hilly areas is revealed by this fact that they are still deprived of basic amenities like food, clothing and shelter. It is the responsibility of the Union Government as well as the Parliament and parliamentarians also to provide them in 21st century, the basic amenities at least. If we are still unable to provide them even drinking water facility, how we can claim that development works are taking place there. This requires to be considered seriously. Every year Central Government and State Government sanction the grants for the development of hilly areas, but the sufficient funds are not being provided for the purpose.

Forests can not be protected effectively unless development works takes place in hilly areas. Today, there is a need to protect the environment. I think alongwith the maintenance of trees, people are also required to be look after. We promote deforestation however, a special scheme is required to be formulated for the people living in forests. I would like to appeal the Central Government to formulate a special five year scheme for these people. Sahyadri and Satpura mountains are situated in Maharashtra. Maharashtra Government has formulated a scheme for the people living in that particular hilly area. But, it has been noticed many times that the actually needy persons are not getting the benefit of the scheme formulated for them. Today potable water is not available in hilly areas. It is a very serious problem. Central Government should formulate a special scheme to resolve this problem. Central Government should not think that it is responsibility of the State Government to formulate the scheme. Today, you are in power but for the last 50 years you were not in power so when you are in power, you should work for the welfare of the poor people. You cannot live on air only. Food is essential to live. These people are having lack of means which should be provided to them.

I hope that

"Jab milega yeh mkan, band hoga tera yeg dukan,
Paharo say jo takrata hay, used tufan kahtey hai
jo tufano say takrata hay, used 'Main' ekthey hain"

I am expressing myself in plain words. We have full rights to speak plainly in Parliament. Unless as adopt this technique, you will not move. Such types of words are used during the discussion. All of us are discussing over the problem of hilly areas. We all do not live in hilly areas. As we are in Parliament, we must think about problems of people living in hilly areas. Poverty should

be eradicated. Government should formulate an effective programme to eradicate the poverty in hilly areas also. Government has enough funds. And if there is shortage of money then it should generate additional revenue, but if the Government increases the prices for this purpose we will certainly oppose that. Not only the opposition members but also the ruling party members support such a move. Prices of milk and foodgrains are required to be brought down. Rationing system in hilly areas is also required to be more effective.

[*English*]

SHRI C.P. RADHAKRISHNAN (Coimbatore): What about milk producers, rice producers and agriculturists?

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: It is required to give maximum benefit to the people engaged in production works. The maximum share of benefit from the subsidy provided by the Central or State Government should go to the producers. Poor people also should not be put into trouble. As I have stated earlier, Government should consider to formulate a special plan for the hilly areas and I hope that the same is being done.

VAIDYA VISHNU DATT SHARMA (Jammu): Mr. Speaker, Sir, a year ago, people from South were on pilgrimage to Amarnath. We were making arrangements to take them to Amarnath. Pilgrims were not having any other cloth except dhoti and kamiz. We asked them that Amarnath is a very cold place, temperature there goes into minus. They said that they have a chadar with them to get protection from cold. My aim to mention this incident is that the people living in plains and in coastal areas can not imagine the life and the problems of the people living in minus temperature. Therefore, the people who formulate the schemes should take care of general development and meaningful programmes should be formulated for the development of people living in hilly areas. In comparison to the development taken place in other parts of the country, hilly areas are still under developed. Even after the 50 years of our independence there are such backward areas in hilly regions where people have not yet seen any bus or train. The situation is to such an extent that it takes months to reach a letter there as post offices are situated far from their places. Circumstances get changed till they receive the letter. I mean to say that it is difficult to imagine that what sort of development schemes will work out in hilly areas. The actual cost of construction of roads in hilly areas is manyfold than the estimated cost in plain areas. Therefore, while estimating the cost of construction of roads and to allocate the funds for developmental projects in hilly areas, the authority, council or the concerned

officers should consider over the fact that hilly areas required more allocation of funds due to geographical diversities.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, my constituency lacks educational facilities. There is only one school in the area of 10-15 kms. It is not easy for the children to cover such a long distance daily to get education. If the Government considers to remove illiteracy from these areas, it is very essential to open large number of schools and to appoint the teachers there. That is why the funds you earmark in budget for education in plains do not prove sufficient for hilly areas. Therefore, whether it is a matter of removing illiteracy or to provide roads or to arrange the transport and telecommunications facilities, hilly areas require more amount of funds. In these areas, if a terrorist takes shelter in a village, people of that village started recognising him as a terrorist.

If any accident takes place in hilly areas, people have to travel on foot through the hilly terrain to reach police station or a hospital. Sometimes it takes them even two days to do so. The people of hills are living in such adverse conditions. I want to emphasize that if we want meaningful development in these areas and want them to be an integral part of India and make progress in tune with rest of India then we would have to constitute a separate planning commission for them and also make provision for their development as per their requirements.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is no proper arrangements for supply of medicines in these areas. Medicines are not available there. Laddakh has an area of 96 thousand square miles and a population of 1 lakh. There are areas where small hamlets are scattered at a distance of 50 kilometres. Habitation is sparse, you cannot imagine as to how difficult it is to manage if a woman has to deliver a child. It is only through the grace of God that a normal delivery takes and the mother and child are saved. These people do not normally get medical aid or advice. These circumstances also prevail in the rest of hilly areas also. Therefore, I want that a separate Development Board should be constituted for hilly areas.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I hail from Jammu and Kashmir. There are several areas in Jammu and Kashmir which are snow bound for nine months in a year. Due to this, the people living there come out of their homes only for three months to make their living. They have to store food in such quantity that it may last for nine months as they have to remain confined to their rooms for that duration. They live in such hostile environment. Therefore these people can get the real benefit only when the schemes for the development of these areas are formulated by those people who are well aware of the

[Vaidya Vishnu Datt Sharma]

difficulties and circumstances of hilly areas, eager to visit these areas from place to place and draft the schemes according to the particular situation of an area, otherwise it will be of no use. Similarly, conditions are prevailing in the rest of hilly areas whether it is of Himachal Pradesh or any other place situated in the lap of great Himalayas. The reason for raising the issue of creating separate states today after 50 years of independence is that a despite remaining under a single rule, no development and progress took place in these areas.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, these areas have yet to reap the harvest of independence. Even the essential commodities of life are not available to the people of these areas. There are many far-flung areas in hills where even washing soap is not available to the people. One is surprised how the people living in so far-flung areas of lofty mountains, carry the goods to their homes. The entire country should ponder over the sufferings of these people and prepare a plan for their welfare.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, provision will also have to be made for ensuring that the people of hilly areas may get proper price for their goods and crops. Fruits are cultivated there but they get rotten there in absence of proper transportation facilities and roads. In some areas mineral stones are found in abundance but these can not be transported due to lack of roads. Sapphire is extracted in huge quantity in my area and its extraction has been going on for centuries but it does not reach roadhead due to absence of transportation. People either travel on foot or ride horses but there is no means of transport. There are various minerals and stones which are found in different areas but they are not being extracted. If those minerals and stone could reach the market the poverty of these areas could be removed to a great extent.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is lot of misues of forest wood due to absence of transportation facilities and roads in these areas. There is terror in many hilly areas due to the activities of the terrorists. These areas are on the border of Pakistan and have become a hot bed of their terrorist activities. The police can not reach there inaccessible and inhospitable areas as the vehicles cannot be driven to these places. The people living there cut and store the wood and also use it as fuel but the terrorist set afire the depots where the wood is stored. These areas are being ruined like this. Deforestation is taking place and the wood is being destroyed. I would like to tell you that till now the terrorists have destroyed forest wood worth Rs. 5 billion by setting afire. To check such activities it is essential to make available telecommunication, road transportation, hospital, education facility and supply of other essential commodities to these areas. It is also essential to make provision for

transportation of the produce of these areas to the market. All these arrangements should be made according to the circumstances of a particular area. Hence it is my submission to accept the Resolution moved by hon. Member Shri Maheshwar Singh in which it has been suggested that a separate Board for the development of the hilly areas should be constituted. The Government of India should provide adequate funds for the board so that the neglected people living in far flung areas may enjoy maximum facilities and fruits of development may reach them. They may also feel proud of living in an independent country, like rest of their countrymen. To achieve this it is necessary to set up a board. With these words I conclude and thank you for giving me time to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all, I would like to congratulate the mover of this Resolution, Shri Maheshwar Singh who hails from the hilly State, not only the hilly State but from the mountainous State. This is a very crucial topic which he has raised. We are celebrating the entry into the new millennium and we have just completed 50 years of our independence. The fact is that this Resolution has received probably the unanimous support from all sides of the House, irrespective of party or colour or creed.

If one looks to the map of India starting from Ladakh to the Himalayan ranges, one finds some places like Banihal Pass, Western Ghats, Eastern Ghats, etc. which are very well known geographically as well as in geo-political terms. It is because these are the areas where there is a lot of turmoil-geo-political and geo-strategic. But there are many lesser areas.

I am glad that he has mentioned other areas also. An elementary student of geography will tell you that anything beyond 3000 feet is a mountain, Shri Maheshwar Singh coming from the mountainous region knows that whether it is Himalayan region or Ladakh or the so called Uttarakhand i.e. the Kumaon Hills and Garwal Hills depends solely on money order economy. There is money order economy because a bulk of our Army personnel are recruited from there and bulk of our ex-servicemen are settled there. But there are many lesser known-height-wise-hilly ranges which are calm and peaceful and who do not indulge in militancy or political upheavals. They have remained probably not so prominently in the eyes of the Planning Commission and us.

Sir, the Himalayan ranges as well as the other hilly areas have been the repository of India's spirituality, its culture, its water wealth, and its forest wealth. The areas

to which you belong and other areas like, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Rajasthan, Banaswara, Jhabua, Dule of Maharashtra, North Eastern regions, are the repositories of India's mineral wealth. These are the areas which are inhabited by tribals. These are the areas which are inhabited by people who do not have the minimum required necessities. There is no communication system. There is no facility of administration, leave alone the other segments of the administration.

Sir, my hon. friend, Shri Ramesh Chennithala was referring to Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput areas. Sir, Koraput is a place which has given to India the concept of blast furnace. Much before the Germans or the Russians or the Swedish or the gigantic Japanese plants made blast furnace, it was the tribals of Koraput who gave the concept of blast furnace in their own primitive way. Koraput is again a place which has given to the world the word 'oriza', the botanical name for rice.

Sir, we have been discussing in this House the incidents of starvation deaths, famine, migration, selling of children and their exploitation in Koraput, Bolangir and Kalahandi. The agency areas of Andhra Pradesh—Vijayanagaram, Visakhapatnam, Srikakulam—along with Bastar and Koraput, have given rise to People's War Group.

It has given rise to social upheavals. A socio-economic problem has been converted into a socio-political problem. How do we tackle it? By the might of our armed forces and by the might of the police we treat it as a law and order problem. Therefore, I am extremely grateful to Shri Maheshwar Singh because he has drawn the attention of the House saying that here is a segment of people who have contributed so much to India over the last five thousand years in various respects, who are crying out for our attention. We do not focus our attention because they do not have the collective bargaining power. They do not raise their voices. They are simple people. They are happy people; happy-go-lucky type. They are satisfied with whatever they have got and they do not come and beseech us arrogantly or aggressively. Nor do they draw our attention.

That is all the more reason why we in our wisdom as a House of the People, who are accountable to the people, responsible to the people, should focus our attention on these unfortunate brothers and sisters of ours who live in these areas devoid of any development, whether it is railways, whether it is border roads, whether it is roads or whether it is communication. In spite of the IT revolution, in spite of the communication revolution, in spite of the white revolution, the green revolution and the blue revolution, nothing touches them. They are still

primitive, their lives are primitive, their houses are primitive, there is no sanitation, there is no health facility, and when a cyclone like the one which hit Orissa comes, their shelter is also blown away. There is no semblance of the so-called civilisation as we would like to call it, because they are far more civilised than we are.

Therefore, all these grandiose plans of the Planning Commission—we have seen nine or ten of them—and all these Formulas like the Gadgil Formula, the Modified Gadgil Formula, the Bharadwaj Formula, the Mukherjee Formula, the Gap-Filling Formula of the various Finance Commissions—we have had ten of them—have not been able to touch upon the rediments or the basic necessities of these areas. What were these areas fifty years back? Particularly Kalahandi was the granary of Western Orissa which used to have the same rice production as that of Balasore or the irrigated areas of Puri and Cuttack. It had the same amount of production as probably Krishna-Godavari valley. It is the deposits in Koraput, Kalahandi and Bastar as well as the Visakhapatnam agency area of Andhra Pradesh. Most of the iron ore, most of the manganese ore, most of the asbestos and the chromite ore come from our area. I come from a placer where there is 90 per cent of the chromite of India. But there is not a single paisa investment in that area.

They are all tribals. They are poor people. Only the Himalayan region has drawn our attention because of the very many turnmolls which have taken place. Even now Kargil is engaging our attention because that is a very sensitive area. But there are less sensitive areas. Take for instance Nilgiri Hills, the Vynad Forests the Jhabua area, and the Panch Mahal area. Now, in the North-Eastern region there is a cry for the Bodoland. Similarly, there is a cry for the creation of Jharkhand State and Utrakhand State. All these are the manifestation of the neglect which has been shown whether by us in this House or by the Planning Commission or by the Government of the day, whatever it may be. But the point is, we must focus our attention to these areas. We must not allow them to live on money-order economies, nor should we allow them only to do whatever is possible by their own little effort, which is very meagre.

These are the areas which have given such things as the Chipko Movement which is trying to conserve, protect and preserve our natural heritage. The area of Pugh Valley just north of Rohtang Pass and Manali area is the repository of the alternate source of energy. We have not tapped that. The only vestige of a 100 per cent Aryan village is near Kargil. We have never focussed our attention on them. It had to be brought to our focus

[Shri K.P. Singh Deo]

by German tourists who ran away from a bus which stopped at Kargil during the 50-day war. That is how we found that there is an Aryan village somewhere there where people had blue-grey eyes and beautiful blond hair. And that is the last reminiscence of civilisation. Now, the Anthropological Survey of India has found out that there are ancient tribes where the population is not at all increasing. All the male children are dying out. We have not yet found a solution to this, neither have we focussed our attention on them. So one can go on speaking endlessly but the fact remains. Shri Maheshwar Singh has pointed out that our focus and attention should be directed there. We have had different schemes which are only in pen and paper. We have had many schemes for tribal areas like the Tribal Development Corporation, Tribal Development Blocks. We have many number of office memoranda from the Ministry of Personnel trying to give them a semblance of administration by sending good officers from Delhi and other States so that they can look after the basic needs of those areas of remote and hilly regions. But nothing has come out. I would like to appeal to this House that this is a subject which goes beyond party and any other shades of opinion. We must focus our attention. We must have a Board on hilly areas not necessarily above 3000 feet but below 3000 feet which are hilly as well as mountainous terrain.

I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH (Bulandshahar): Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on the resolution moved by Shri Maheshwar Singh. If the proposed Board for Hilly region is set up then certainly there will be improvement in the life of those people who are living in hilly regions. I would like to draw the attention of the House to three-four points which in my opinion are necessary for hill development and for the development of people who are living there. They are road, health, security and resources which are required for creating employment.

The condition of roads is very bad. People have to walk even 20 kms to reach their home. Children cannot go to school in the absence of roads. Since there are no schools, therefore, special schemes should be formulated for providing educational facilities.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You please wait for a minute. The discussion, on this resolution will take one more hour to complete as three hon'ble Members, an hon'ble Minister and the mover have yet to speak. It is not possible to complete this discussion today itself. Therefore, we will

discuss this upto 6'0 clock and after that the discussion will continue because one more hour is required for this.

SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH: Atleast arrangement of one teacher should be made even if there are only 10 students to study. If this arrangement is done their children could get education. There should be separate budget for education in hilly areas. If the children get Education they would progress. Just now our colleague from Kashmir mentioned about the Health Services in hilly regions. In reality there the health services are not good. There are no doctors upto 50 kms. There is no means to take patient to the hospital and in many cases the patient die on way. My request is that for the development of hilly regions health centre should be set up at various places which are closer to the habitation in hilly areas. This way they can save their lives. Arrangement of doctors and medicines should be made by establishing Health service centres. In my opinion the Board for hilly regions would make such arrangements.

As regards security, I would like to say that every individual residing in hilly area act as a soldier. I had the opportunity to visit Twang. A person residing in Delhi doesn't know where he is going. The people who are residing in that area on Indo-China Border are also protecting the borders of the country. There is a lot of difference in the life of people living in hilly areas and in plains. If they also think that why they should live in hilly areas then who will protect the borders of the country. We cannot totally depend on army for the protection of hilly area. Therefore, the facilities which we are giving to them are too inadequate. Everything is lacking in their life. The resolution which our colleague Shri Maheshwar Singhji has moved regarding setting up of Board for Hilly region is a very good suggestion.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, now I would like to give a few suggestions for the development of hilly regions. For the development of hilly regions, there is a need to encourage tourism. If a person residing in plains visit hilly areas then certainly he will spend some money and it will increase the earnings of people living there. In case we are unable to attract foreign tourists, then we can encourage domestic tourism. Most of our pilgrimages are in mountains. If the facilities of good roads, good accommodation and good quality food are provided then more people will visit these pilgrimages. This will increase the income of people of hilly areas.

In Uttarakhand region there are various pilgrimages like Kedarnath, Badrinath, Gangotri, Yamunotri and Devprayag. Every year lakhs of people visit these pilgrimages. But most of the people stay there only for

one two days because there is no proper arrangement of accommodation, communication facility and means of entertainment. Besides these, people do not have the habit of staying in that kind of environment. If all these facilities are provided there then these people may stay there for one week instead of two days. Due to this, the feeling of neglect which the people of hilly area face will not be there.

Special attention should be paid towards Dairy Development in hilly areas. If cattle of very good breed are provided then that will also help in the development of that region. Many developmental activities have been undertaken in plains but no developmental activities have been undertaken in hill areas. There the capacity of milk can be increased. From there the milk can be brought within 24 to 48 as there is cold weather and hence the milk will not get spoiled. If it is brought down to plains then certainly they will get more money. The production of fruits is good in all hilly areas. Varieties of fruits are available there, but no plant has been installed there for fruit preservation. All such plants are situated in plains. There is hardly any demand for apples of Shimla there and the farmers have to sell it at throw away prices. In Himachal and Kashmir, the quality of apples are very good but the farmers cannot get one-fourth of the price of Delhi. The farmers are being exploited. These shortcomings can be removed by setting up food preservation units in hilly areas. If the facility of means of transport are provided then the farmers of Himachal and Kashmir can sell their produce at the Mandies of Delhi and in mandies of other cities also. It will help farmers to get good price provided they sell it in time. For this, we need to construct roads and provide transportation on priority basis. Even today in hilly regions there are many such regions where we cannot grow anything. If we provide horticulture knowledge, and saplings of fruit trees to farmers of that area then certainly the horticulture will develop and alongwith that the condition of farmers will also improve. If the production of fruits are increased then definitely the people in the area will earn more money and this will lead to improvement in their standard of living. I have also visited Ultrakhand and hilly areas of North-East. During rainy season the rivers turn very dangerous and there are no bridges to go from one hill to the other. Therefore, they have to go by going down two kms and climbing up other two kms. If bridges are constructed there then it will reduce distance and means of communication will increase. Even though the bridges are small but there must be a network of bridges. Wherever there is habitation those areas should be linked through bridges.

17.56 hrs.

(MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*)

Whenever we speak to the people of hilly regions, they always mention about one problem that if they have

to come to Delhi they have to face lot of difficulties for railway reservation. They have to go to the station atleast 2 days before and even for enquiry they have to go to the station.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: At 6'0 clock, we have to adjourn the House. Please conclude.

[*Translation*]

SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH: For the development of hilly region, the railway reservation facilities should be provided in all big cities of hilly regions. I am not talking about the development of railways only but I am talking about the development of hilly region. In hilly regions, people face difficulty particularly in railway reservation. I got the opportunity to visit Kashmir two years ago with a Committee. A lot of weeds have grown up around the Dal Lake and a lot of silt is also being deposited in it. The Dal Lake which once was the heart of Kashmir has lost its charm. My request to government is that it should be desilted again and its depth should be increased by dredging so that it retains its lost charm.

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Chhatrapal Singh, you can continue your speech later.

[*Translation*]

SHRI CHHATRAPAL SINGH: I am concluding my speech in one minute. For the development of hills special attention should be paid towards sheep rearing, wool industry and handicrafts. I will mention my remaining points later on. Thank you.

18.00 hrs.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): Mr. Speaker, Sir, during this discussion hon'ble Member Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmuni mentioned about the construction of a hellipad at Tiger Reserve of Ranthambore. The President of America is to visit that place and something has been said about this. I have got the facts that no hellipad is being constructed there. A hellipad within a parameter of 3 kms already exists in the Tiger Reserve. Last year when the Deputy Prime Minister of Britain paid a visit, he landed there because he had to go to that Reserve. This time also, since it is expected that the American President may visit that place only repair work of hellipad is being done there. Nothing new is being constructed there.

18.01 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till eleven of the clock on Monday, April 17, 2000/Chaitra 28, 1922 (Saka)