

Fourteenth Lok Sabha**Session : 7****Date : 21-03-2006**

Participants : [Thomas Shri P.C., Rana Shri Kashi Ram, Lagadapati Shri Rajagopal, Gangwar Shri Santosh Kumar, Radhakrishnan Shri Varkala, Deo Shri Bikram Keshari, Rao Shri Kavuru Samba Siva, Singh Shri Rajiv Ranjan, Deora Shri Milind Murli, Singh Shri Rajiv Ranjan, Chakraborty Shri Sujan, Rijiju Shri Kiren, Mehta Shri Alok Kumar, Yerrannaidu Shri Kinjarapu, Pathak Shri Brajesh, Badnore Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh, Panda Shri Prabodh, Yerrannaidu Shri Kinjarapu, Reddy Shri Suravaram Sudhakar, Manoj Dr. K.S., Saroj Shri Tufani, Athawale Shri Ramdas, Deo Shri Bikram Keshari, Rawat Prof. Rasa Singh, Ramadass Prof. M., Mistry Shri Madhusudan Devram, Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari, Deora Shri Milind Murli, Singh Shri Lakshman, Singh Shri Rajiv Ranjan](#)

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Title : Further discussion on the motion for consideration of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Bill, 2006 as passed by Rajya Sabha, moved by Shri Murli Deora on 20th March, 2006 (Bill Passed).

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत (अजमेर) : माननीय सभापति महोदया, मैं पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस विनियामक बोर्ड विधेयक, 2006 का स्वागत करने के लिए खड़ा हुआ हूँ। इस विधेयक को लाने का श्रेय एनडीए की सरकार को जाता है कि उसने वर्ष 2002 में ही इसके बारे में चिन्तन कर लिया था और इसका मसौदा वगैरह तैयार करके यह बिल संसद में लाई थी। लेकिन कुछ ऐसी परिस्थितियाँ बनीं जिसमें 13 वीं लोकसभा भंग हो गयी और परिणामस्वरूप उस समय यह बिल पारित नहीं हो सका था, साथ ही इस बिल को संसदीय कमेटी के पास विचार-विमर्श के लिए जाना था, इसलिए इसमें थोड़ा विलम्ब हुआ। उसी समय से ही यह आवश्यकता महसूस की जा रही थी कि पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस के लिए एक विनियामक बोर्ड बनना चाहिए क्योंकि इस क्षेत्र में सरकारी कम्पनियों के साथ-साथ कई प्राइवेट कम्पनियाँ भी आ रही हैं, इसलिए उनको अभिनियन्त्रित और विनियमित करने के लिए इसका बनना आवश्यक है। इस समय माननीय मंत्री जी यहां विराजमान हैं। जिन मंत्री जी ने इस बिल को राज्य सभा में प्रस्तुत किया था, वे तो अब उस पद को सुशोभित नहीं कर रहे हैं और माननीय श्री मुरली देवरा जी ने उसका कार्यभार संभाल लिया है और चूंकि यह उनका पहला बिल है, इसलिए उनका भी सदन में स्वागत है।

महोदया, इस बिल के सम्बन्ध में मैं कहना चाहूंगा, जैसा कि इस बिल की भूमिका में भी कहा गया है कि पेट्रोलियम, पेट्रोलियम उत्पादों और प्राकृतिक गैस से सम्बन्धित विनिर्दिष्ट क्रियाकलापों में लगे हुए लोगों और उपभोक्ताओं के हितों का संरक्षण करने और देश के सभी भागों में पेट्रोलियम, पेट्रोलियम उत्पादों और प्राकृतिक गैस का अबाधित एवं पर्याप्त प्रदाय सुनिश्चित करने, प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक बाजारों का संवर्द्धन करने, अपरिष्कृत तेल और प्राकृतिक गैस के उत्पादन को छोड़कर पेट्रोलियम, पेट्रोलियम उत्पादों और प्राकृतिक गैस के परिकरण, संसाधन, भण्डारण, परिवहन, वितरण और विपणन को विनियमित करने और उनसे सम्बन्धित आनुांगिक विधियों का विनियमन करने के लिए यह विधेयक लाया गया है।

महोदया, इस क्षेत्र में दो प्रकार के कार्य - अपस्ट्रीम कार्य और डाउनस्ट्रीम कार्य - होते हैं। यह बोर्ड केवल डाउनस्ट्रीम वाले कार्य अर्थात् तेल या प्राकृतिक गैस निकालने और उसके बाद के कार्य जैसे परिकरण, संसाधन, भण्डारण,

परिवहन, वितरण, विपणन आदि को देखने के लिए बनाया गया है। लेकिन मैं सरकार से कहना चाहूंगा कि अपस्ट्रीम कार्यों जैसे तेल खोजने के लिए, तेल का अनुसंधान करने के लिए, गैस का पता लगाने के लिए, गैस का अनुसंधान करने के लिए, तेल या गैस को निकालने आदि के लिए भी इसी तरह का एक बोर्ड बनना चाहिए। उसके बारे में इस विधेयक में कोई संकेत नहीं है। उसके बारे में आपकी क्या नीति है, उसके लिए बोर्ड कब तक बन जाएगा? इन चीजों के बारे में माननीय मंत्री जी जब जवाब दें तो स्थिति को स्पष्ट करें। इस बोर्ड के पास तेल या प्राकृतिक गैस के अन्वेषण और खुदाई आदि कार्यों का नियन्त्रण नहीं होगा। इसके बारे में क्या स्थिति है? आज हमारे देश में 70 प्रतिशत तेल बाहर से आयात करना पड़ता है। हमारे यहां तेल का उत्पादन बहुत कम है और इसके परिणामस्वरूप देश की जरूरतों के लिए आयात पर निर्भर रहना पड़ता है। पिछले तीन-चार सालों से लगातार यह सुनने में आ रहा है कि गोदावरी और कृष्णा बेसिन में तेल और प्राकृतिक गैस का बहुत बड़ा भण्डार मिला है। राजस्थान के जैसलमेर, जालौर और बाड़मेर में बहुत बड़ा तेल का भण्डार मिला है। बॉम्बे हाई जो पहले सैचुरेशन प्वाइन्ट पर आ गया था वहां नए कुओं का पता लगाया जा रहा है और अन्य नए-नए क्षेत्रों में भी खुदाई का काम चल रहा है। ओएनजीसी एवं अन्य सरकारी कम्पनियों के साथ ही प्राइवेट कम्पनियों जैसे रिलायंस और एस्सार और केयर्न एनर्जी जैसी विदेशी कम्पनियों को भी इस क्षेत्र में अनुमति दी गयी है।

मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि जब से नई लाइसेंस नीति बनी है, क्या कारण है कि प्राइवेट सेक्टर में जिन लोगों को इसके तहत खुदाई और अन्यान्य काम दिया गया है, उन्हें तो तेल के और गैस के भंडार मिल रहे हैं, लेकिन जो सरकारी तेल कम्पनीज हैं, वह इस काम में पिछड़ रही हैं, क्योंकि उन्हें उतने भंडार नहीं मिल रहे हैं? क्या इसके पीछे यह कारण तो नहीं है कि निजी क्षेत्र को ज्यादा बढ़ावा देने और सरकारी कम्पनीज को, जिनमें जनता का करोड़ों रुपया लगा है, दरकिनार करने की कोशिश की जा रही है?

सभापति महोदया : रासा सिंह जी, कृपया आप अपनी बात संक्षेप में टूट्टि पाइंट कहें, क्योंकि इस बिल को अलाटेड समय जो दिया गया है, वह खत्म हो रहा है। मंत्री जी भी जवाब देने के लिए बैठे हैं।

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : सभापति महोदया, मैं टूट्टि पाइंट ही अर्ज कर रहा हूं। मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि इंडियन ऑयल, ऑयल इंडिया लि., ओएनजीसी, एचपीसीएल और बीपीसीएल कम्पनीज अभी तेल और गैस वितरण का काम करती हैं, लेकिन खुदाई और अन्वेषण के क्षेत्र में विदेशी कम्पनीज का सहारा नहीं ले रही हैं, लगता है इसीलिए उन्हें ज्यादा सफलता इसमें नहीं मिल रही है और दूसरी जो निजी क्षेत्र की कम्पनीज हैं, उन्हें ज्यादा सफलता मिल रही है। इस बारे में भी मंत्री जी अपन जवाब देते समय स्थिति स्पष्ट करें।

कई माननीय सदस्यों ने इस बिल पर चर्चा करते हुए कहा कि तेल की कीमतों पर नियंत्रण का अधिकार इस विनियामक बोर्ड को है। लेकिन मैं क्षमा चाहता हूं और मंत्री जी से कहना चाहूंगा कि पूरे बिल में कीमतों को निर्धारण करने के बारे में विनियामक बोर्ड के प्राधिकार का उल्लेख नहीं है। यह बोर्ड अनियमितताओं की जांच कर सकता है, अनियमितताओं के नियंत्रण की बात भी कही गई है, लेकिन कीमतें निर्धारित करने का काम इस विनियामक बोर्ड के कार्य क्षेत्र के बाहर है। इसलिए मंत्री जी इसे भी स्पष्ट करें कि क्या अंतर्राष्ट्रीय भावों के आधार पर या अंतर्राष्ट्रीय स्थिति के आधार पर तेल की कीमतें तय होंगी अथवा कोई मैकेनिज्म है, जो कीमतें तय करेगा?

इस बिल में विनियामक बोर्ड के गठन और उसमें लिए जाने वाले सदस्यों के बारे में अच्छा प्रावधान किया गया है कि इसके अंदर इस क्षेत्र को जानने वाले लोगों को स्थान दिया जाएगा। केन्द्रीय सरकार के योजना आयोग के ऊर्जा सेक्टर के सदस्य की अध्यक्षता के तहत एक सर्च कमेटी का गठन किया गया है। इस सर्च कमेटी के उनके अलावा वित्त मंत्रालय, विधि एवं न्याय मंत्रालय, पेट्रोलियम एवं गैस मंत्रालय और वाणिज्य तथा उद्योग मंत्रालय के सचिव सदस्य होंगे। यह समिति बोर्ड के सदस्यों का पैनाल बनाएगी। लेकिन मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि इसमें जनता की समस्याओं को जानने के लिए और परिवहन से

सम्बन्धित क्षेत्र में जो समस्याएं हैं, उनको भी जानने वाले लोगों को इसमें लिया जाना चाहिए, ताकि वे इन क्षेत्रों में तेल के बारे में जो समस्याएं हैं, उनको उठा सकें।

सभापति महोदय : कृपया समाप्त करें।

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : सभापति महोदय, थोड़ी घंटी कम बजाएं, अभी मुझे थोड़ा समय और चाहिए इसलिए मैं आपका संरक्षण चाहता हूँ। आप इस कुर्सी पर विराजमान हुई हैं, इसके लिए हम आपका अभिनंदन करते हैं।

सभापति महोदय : लेकिन इस कुर्सी के मान को भी आप देखें।

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : राजस्थान के अंदर, गुजरात के अंदर और अन्य जगहों पर कई कम्पनीज तेल निकालने का काम कर रही हैं। लेकिन आपने इन जगहों पर रिफाइनरीज स्थापित न करके पंजाब में, यू.पी. आदि में रिफाइनरीज स्थापित की हैं, जहां कि तेल नहीं निकाला जाता है, जबकि राजस्थान में तेल के विशाल भंडार मिले हैं। राजस्थान में जैसलमेर, सांचौर, बाड़मेर और जालौर के अंदर तेल के भंडार मिले हैं इसलिए वहां पर तेल की रिफाइनरीज स्थापित करने के बारे में भी आप विचार करें। राजस्थान में रिफाइनरीज स्थापित करने के बारे में सरकार की ओर से कहा जाता है कि सरकारी कम्पनीज बनाएंगी और कभी कहा जाता है कि प्राइवेट कम्पनीज बनाएंगी। राजस्थान से होकर तेल जाएगा, गैस जाएगी और राजस्थान के लोग देखते रहेंगे, क्योंकि वहां रिफाइनरीज नहीं हैं, तो वहां के लोग कैसे इस चीज को बर्दाश्त करेंगे। इसलिए मैं मंत्री जी से कहना चाहूंगा कि वह इस बारे में भी स्थिति स्पष्ट करें।

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14.00 hrs.

मैं एक बात और कहना चाहता हूँ। तेल के अंदर मिलावट की समस्या बहुत ज्यादा है। मिट्टी के तेल का भाव थोड़ा कम है और उसका रंग भी बदल दिया गया है लेकिन डीजल के अंदर उसको मिलाया जाता है। इस मिलावट को सरकार रोके, क्योंकि इस मिलावट से इंजन पर भारी दुप्रभाव पड़ता है। अभी मैंने समाचार पत्र में पढ़ा कि हर आउटलेट पर एक यंत्र लगा रहेगा जो यह बताएगा कि तेल में मिलावट है या नहीं है। अगर ऐसा कोई यंत्र है तो वह सभी जगह लगाया जाए।

एक समस्या और है कि इनके डीलर को कमीशन कम मिलता है। रिलाइंस में तो सारी सुविधाएं हैं, इसलिए सारी गाड़ियां रिलाइंस की ओर भाग रही हैं लेकिन सरकारी कंपनियों के आउटलेट्स का विकास नहीं हो रहा है। नियामक बोर्ड के बारे में तथा अन्य नियम जो आये हैं उनके बारे में लोगों को जानकारी नहीं होती है। अब तो हर फर्लांग पर एक पेट्रोल पंप हो गया है और जिन्होंने पेट्रोल-पंप लिये भी हैं वे भी वापस करने के लिए तैयार हो रहे हैं।

कीमतों के निर्धारण करने की बात भी महत्वपूर्ण है तथा जो पाइपलाइन आ रही है उसका क्या हुआ? इरान और पाकिस्तान से होकर पाइपलाइन आयेगी या तुर्किस्तान-म्यांमार और बंगला देश से होकर आयेगी, यह भी बताया जाए। सुडान के अंदर, रूस के अंदर हमारी जो सरकारी कंपनियां उन देशों के साथ मिलकर कार्य कर रही हैं, उनकी क्या स्थिति है? कितनी आवश्यकता की पूर्ति होगी और कितना पेट्रोल बाहर से मंगाना पड़ेगा यह भी बताएं तथा खुदाई का काम कब शुरू होगा?

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now. There are still 15 more Members to speak on this Bill. If we give even 10 minutes to each Member, then also it would take around 150 minutes.

प्रो. रासा सिंह रावत : राजधानी के अंदर गैस नहीं मिल रही है, लम्बी-लम्बी लाइनें लगी हुई हैं और सिलेंडर्स की कमी जो देश में आ रही है, माननीय मंत्री जी उस बारे में भी बताएं।

SHRI K.S. RAO (ELURU): Madam, this is the first Bill that our hon. Minister is introducing as the new Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. I wish him all success not only for getting this Bill passed, but also for his efforts to bring in substantial changes in the field of hydrocarbons in this country. This Bill should have been passed a long time back, particularly when there was a change in the Administered Price Mechanism and a lot of encouragement was given to private sector and the Government decided to de-regulate the petro-chemicals sector. At least now the hon. Minister has brought this Bill and I am sure, that this Bill would be passed by this House aimed at bringing about energy security in this country and also to rectify a lot of irregularities that are presently plaguing this sector.

Sir, to begin with, I would like to refer to some of the clauses in this Bill. It is a well drafted Bill on the lines of other similar Bills that were meant for setting up regulators for different other sectors in the country. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister two to three points for his consideration. In regard to selection of a Chairperson it has been mentioned in the Bill and I quote:

“The Central Government shall appoint a Chairperson and other members of the Board from amongst persons of eminence in the field of petroleum and natural gas, industry, management finance, law, administration and consumer affairs.”

But in the matter of selection of a member from the legal community it has been mentioned specifically and I quote:

“...provided no person shall be appointed as a member (legal) unless he is qualified to be a judge in a High Court.”

We do understand this stipulation when it comes to selecting a member from the legal community. Now, similarly, should there not be a technical member qualified in that particular subject? But such a thing has not been mentioned anywhere in the Bill. I would like the hon. Minister to see to it that a similar condition also be incorporated in the Bill. At least there must be one technical member with enough experience in the particular field. Otherwise, it would be headed by a permanent non-technical member resulting in the regulator itself becoming useless.

My second point is about clause 31. It is mentioned there that a Technical Member will have to be there on the Appellate Tribunal. I certainly support that because no right decisions will be taken by the Tribunal also without a Technical Member. But then it is said:

“The Technical Member (Petroleum and Natural Gas) shall be appointed from the panel prepared by the Search Committee constituted under sub-section (2) of section 4.”

Unfortunately, the Search Committee does not consist of even one Technical Member. The Search Committee consists of Secretaries and Member, Planning Commission. At times, it may be that none of them may be having technical knowledge particularly connected with petroleum and natural gas. I wish this Search Committee must consist of one Technical Member who is an expert in hydrocarbons because he will at least look into the real technical aspect to choose the right person as a Member.

Clause 31 also says that a person shall not be qualified for appointment as a Technical Member (Petroleum and Natural Gas) of the Appellate Tribunal unless he is, or has been, a Secretary for at least one year in the Ministry. A Technical Member must also be a Secretary in the Ministry. I was given to understand that on many an occasion, the Secretary of Petroleum and Natural Gas was not a technical person. He was only a bureaucrat. If that were to be so, what is the difficulty in selecting a Technical Member who must necessarily be a Secretary? So, I wish the hon. Minister to give a serious thought to it and see if that requires an amendment in the clause dealing with the Secretary in the Ministry or Department. In other Departments, there will not be a person of eminence in hydrocarbons. If such a Secretary will be there, that Secretary will be there only in this Ministry. And unfortunately, it is headed all the time only by bureaucrats who are not technical people. I wish that an amendment may be required. I wish the hon. Minister to think in these lines. I do not want to go into clause by clause of the Bill. But I wish the hon. Minister to take care of these three points.

I appreciate that this Bill is brought with a view to protect the interests of the consumer. I am happy that this most important point is incorporated. The Bill also says “to ensure uninterrupted and adequate supply in all parts of the country including remote areas” If they really do it, then it is exemplary. But I do not think they will be able to give adequate supply everywhere and ensure fair price. I appreciate these points. It is also said “to promote competitive markets, access to common and contract carriers on a non-discriminatory basis”.

When I went through the objectives for which this Regulatory Board Bill is brought, I felt that they are excellent which I admire. But then, I only have an apprehension as to whether they will be able to assure uninterrupted supply.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. There are three more Members to speak.

SHRI K.S. RAO : Madam, please do not interrupt me. I am not the kind of a person who would speak often.

I wanted to only caution the Minister on things like adulteration that is going on in a big way in this country causing lakhs and lakhs of rupees of loss indirectly. When oil is adulterated, it affects the functioning of the machine and then everything will get spoiled, the cost of which will be abnormal. But there is no mechanism provided in the Vigilance Department to check these things. They are only depending upon the recruiting and investigating agency or appointing an investigatory authority as and when required.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please sum up now. Only eleven minutes are left.

SHRI K.S. RAO : I will do it, Madam.

Then artificial scarcity is another problem. Earlier, taking the opportunity of artificial scarcity, there used to be black-marketing. That also has to be checked.

As far as the distribution of cooking gas is concerned, there is a lot of harassment by the dealers. We too experience this and we also know how much the dealers harass the consumers while issuing the gas cylinders. So, in respect of all these aspects, I wish the hon. Minister to think in terms of providing a permanent investigating mechanism in the Bill.

When it comes to the question of Public Distribution System, it is mentioned many a time that cooking gas meant for domestic use is diverted to commercial use. That also has to be checked.

It is said that in the Krishna-Godavari basin a lot of gas is found by various agencies, like Reliance, Gujarat Petroleum, Cairn Energy, etc. I wish to know from the hon. Minister whether he is going to arrange town gas to Hyderabad. To many of the coastal areas in Andhra Pradesh, in Krishna-Godavari belt, it can be supplied very cheap. The cost can also be brought down substantially. The entire country would be happy if they were to arrange a pipeline and connect it to the pipe directly by which the cost also can be reduced.

There was a proposal by which the ONGC wanted to start a refinery in Andhra Pradesh in the land of 6,000 acres. I understand that it is getting delayed only because of the delay in the acquisition of land. We did not know the inside story as to why it is being delayed in spite of the fact that the ONGC has provided all the funds required for that. We will talk to the Chief Minister also. We request the hon. Minister also to interfere in that.

It is mentioned that the Head Office of the Regulatory Authority will be in Delhi. The Member who spoke before me also talked of this. How many offices will be there in Delhi? Mostly gas is found in Mumbai, Gujarat and in Andhra Pradesh.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Do not elaborate that. You just mention your points.

SHRI K.S. RAO : The Head Office must be situated in any one of these places. At least a regional office of the Regulatory Authority must be provided in Rajahmundry, where gas is found in the vicinity. Due to the acute shortage of the hydro carbons in the country, the hon. Minister must concentrate on research and development on alternative fuels. Through research and development, we will be able to find alternative fuels in this country. According to the Minister himself, we are importing today 26 billion dollars worth of oil. Obviously, the sales of petroleum products must be ten lakh crores of rupees.

Keeping that in mind, we have to find alternative sources of fuel. Use of jetropha, bio-diesel and ethanol is already being encouraged. So, research and development is a must. It must be taken up in a big way. Without that our entire treasury will be spent only on the import of oil.

I understand that the Ministry was thinking in terms of having a collaboration with Mr. Mittal. When the entire technical people are with the ONGC, Oil India, etc, whether it is Mr. Mittal or anybody else, they will utilise our technicians. When the private people can use our own technical engineers and do business worth crores of rupees, why can the Minister not think in terms of utilising our own manpower and doing it by the Government itself?

The ONGC Videsh is doing an excellent job. ... (*Interruptions*) We are having 140 billion dollars worth of foreign exchange reserves. We are paying more interest to the depositors and we are getting less interest by keeping it in the American treasury. I request the hon. Minister to give part of that reserves to the ONGC, the Oil India and other oil marketing companies to take up blocks outside the country and get oil sharing so that our import can be reduced. We can save a lot of money. I understand that the investment that is given to the ONGC Videsh is not to the extent that is required. When we are giving our blocks to the foreigners, why should we not utilise our own technical people by which we can provide employment also?

I would request the hon. Minister to take all these things into account. I congratulate him. I wish that in his tenure the import of oil will be reduced and we will be able to produce all these things locally.

DR. SUJAN CHAKRABORTY (JADAVPUR): Thank you, Madam, for giving me the scope of speaking on such an important Bill. First, I would like to congratulate the new Minister, being a

parliamentarian for a long time, but, maybe, this is the first time he has introduced a Bill, which is of such an important nature.

The question of energy in our country is very important and critical. Technically also, it is a very complex one. There is no doubt that the whole issue should be dealt with properly. There is also no doubt about it that 70 per cent of our oil consumption is getting imported. Therefore, I would agree here that the question of oil or gas exploration is much more important. There is no indication in the given Bill how the things will be regulated, planned or proposed. I hope, the Minister will answer these points at the end.

The original Bill, which was placed in 2003, was scrutinized by the Standing Committee. The Committee has given a lot of suggestions. The Ministry has accepted many of the suggestions. But, some new issues also have been taken up in the new Bill of 2006 like city, local area distribution network, and many other issues, which have never been discussed in the Standing Committee. It would be proper if, maybe, a short time of one month or so is given to the Committee to scrutinize the new points that have been incorporated after the Standing Committee's proposals. I believe, that chance should be given.

As regards the composition of the Board and the competence of technical persons in the Board, Appellate Committee, etc., I broadly agree with what Mr. Rao has suggested. I would not like to go into the details. Yes, it is true that the Chairperson of such an important Board must be a technical one. It cannot be generalized as has been placed in the Bill. Technical, management, finance, and what not, everything can be taken from that end. It must be very professionally, technically expert team.

The composition of Search Committee also is probably somewhat different. The Search Committee is being headed by Member Energy, Planning Commission, which, probably, is not proper. Probably, there is no such reference where Search Committee is being planned that way. Three members in the Board will be rather appointed by the Central Government. The loyalty of the Board to the Government is clear. But, what about the accountability? Is the Board accountable to the Government? It is probably not accountable. Then, whether there should be any scope for the Board to be accountable to the Parliament? It cannot be made accountable just by placing the report in the Parliament. A provision for structured discussion in the Parliament on the functioning and the report of this Board must be provided for.

I would like that some equitable balance of distribution of oil and gas should be there. Whenever the Members speak, they also speak that the reserve is very good in the country, whether it is North Eastern States or Western States or Southern States or the Sunderbans. That has been discussed here also. We have huge reserves of gas. These days, probably, gas is more important than oil. The last century was the arena for oil. But, the new century, obviously, will be the arena for gas. Even the question of gas hydrate also is there. All taken together, the

question of exploration and the question of equitable distribution, since gas is very important for the development of the States and also the remote areas, how best that can be made use of should be planned specifically.

I would like to say that these days in the remote areas, in the districts – not only in the urban areas but also in the rural areas – the necessity of gas distribution is increasing. CNG is being supplied in some cities in the country. But it can be supplied to the other parts of the country. Along with our own gas reserves, we have the scope of inter-country gas pipeline. I would rather propose that the distribution network, the retail network should be coordinated. Since it is related to the development of the States, the State Governments must also have their say. Probably, this Bill has not provided for that. I would like to remind here that a number of scams in the field of oil and gas has taken place over the years. So, involving the States in the process of registration, opening outlets is a must. It should also be provided for.

The question of huge adulteration is there. Yes, it is quite known to us that kerosene is being adulterated with diesel. Petrol is also getting adulterated - Shri Rao has rightly said it – thereby the entire cost is going up. It is affecting the machinery also. So, what should be the method of checking that? Probably, specific scope should be kept in the functioning of the Regulatory Board about this. For example, in the case of milk, lactometers are there. So, we have to think of how things can be invented and developed so that the consumers themselves can understand it.

The question of protection of consumers is a very important issue. The question of checking adulteration and making it known to the consumers is also very much important. I believe that from that end, maybe, some R&D work is also required. From that end, particularly, the question of adulteration should be dealt with.... (*Interruptions*)

I will complete it within one minute. The question of protecting the consumers' right is very important. I agree with you that the Headquarters must be in Delhi. But the branch offices must be there particularly in the areas where the gas reserves are there – maybe in South, in Gujarat or whatever it may be. In West Bengal also, the Sundarbans has very important gas reserves. All of us know about it. So, from that end, Kolkata should also have an office. Otherwise, how will the people appeal when a dispute arises? Whenever there is any dispute, can they come to the Head Office to make the things clear here? No, it is not possible. It cannot be.

Next, the composition of the Appellate Authority is also not correctly maintained. The Appellate Authority cannot be along with that of the Electricity Appellate Authority. It should not be like that. Technically, both are related to energy. But the question of electricity and the question of oil and gas are completely different. So, it should be a separate Appellate Authority in this case also.

For the protection of consumers, the most important thing is pricing. A lot of debate is going on for years together in this regard. Towards conclusion, I would like to say that 60 per cent of the oil price is because of the burden of tax. How can it be properly shared? It is a very important issue. Maybe, within one and a half years, probably price has been increased four times. Maybe, because of the pressure of the Left Parties and others, it could not be increased the way it was getting proposed. So, there must be a pricing mechanism in respect of oil and gas. It should be affordable to the people. Affordability and the availability of gas is the index of the development of the State. That should be the approach in fixing the price also. I believe that from this angle, the Ministry can think of. It would be better – since new incorporations are also there - that a Committee should further cross-check the issues within a month so that we can come to a conclusive decision.

With these words, I would congratulate the new hon. Minister. He is a long-time Parliamentarian. He has taken the Ministerial responsibility now. I hope, he will correct the issues and the country will prosper further.

श्री ब्रजेश पाठक (उन्नाव) : सभापति महोदया, आपने मुझे पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस विनियामक बोर्ड विधेयक, 2006 पर बोलने का समय दिया, इसके लिए मैं आपका आभार व्यक्त करता हूँ। साथ ही मैं नये पेट्रोलियम मंत्री जी का भी आभार व्यक्त करना चाहता हूँ। मैं समझता हूँ कि जो सरकार नहीं कर पा रही थी, जिसे करने में सरकार चूक रही थी, उसी कारण इस बोर्ड का गठन किया गया है। इस काम को सरकार बखूबी नहीं कर पा रही थी। मैं ज्यादा समय नहीं लूंगा, केवल कुछ बिन्दु आपके सामने रखना चाहता हूँ। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से अनुरोध करना चाहता हूँ कि बोर्ड के गठन के साथ इस बात का ध्यान रखा जाए कि तेल ऐसा क्षेत्र है, जिससे हिन्दुस्तान के कमजोर वर्ग, अमीर वर्ग तथा अन्य सभी वर्गों के लोग सीधे जुड़े हुए हैं। अगर तेल ठीक ढंग से और सही दाम पर हमारी गरीब जनता के पास पहुंच जायेगा तो वास्तव में हिन्दुस्तान के बारे में जो सपना लोगों ने देखा था, हम कुछ अमल कर पाते।

सभापति महोदया, रेगुलेटरी बोर्ड का गठन एक सब से महत्वपूर्ण पहलू है। मेरा कहना है कि इस बोर्ड में तेल विशेषज्ञों को लिया जाये। चाहे उस बोर्ड में सरकारी आफिसर हो या न हो लेकिन उसमें तेल विशेषज्ञ का होना जरूरी है। उसे विषय की अच्छी तरह से जानकारी होनी चाहिये कि हम लोग तेल के क्षेत्र में कैसे अच्छी प्रगति कर सकते हैं और कैसे उपभोक्ताओं को सस्ते दाम पर तेल उपलब्ध करा सकते हैं।

सभापति महोदया, हमारे देश में तेल महंगा बिकता है क्योंकि हमारे देश में तेल का कम उत्पादन होता है और हम विदेशों पर ज्यादा निर्भर रहते हैं। हम रोज़ अखबारों और टी.वी. पर देखते हैं, सड़क के किनारे विज्ञापनों को देखते हैं। मेरा मंत्री जी से सवाल है कि इन विज्ञापनों की क्या आवश्यकता है? यदि तेल के बारे में विज्ञापन नहीं दिया जायेगा तो क्या तेल नहीं बिकेगा? मेरे पास इस प्रकार की सूचनाएँ हैं कि विज्ञापन कम्पनियों 20 से 25 प्रतिशत तक तेल कम्पनियों को कमीशन देती हैं ताकि उनके विज्ञापन टी.वी., अखबार और सड़क के चौराहों पर लगे हुये दिखाई देते हैं। मैं पूछना चाहता हूँ कि क्या विभाग द्वारा तेल को बचाने के लिये विज्ञापन नहीं दिये जा सकते हैं? तेल को बेचने के लिये विज्ञापन देने की क्या आवश्यकता

है, यह मेरी समझ में नहीं आता है। इसलिये मैं मंत्री जी से अपील करूंगा कि इन विज्ञापनों पर अंकुश लगाना चाहिये और उन्हें पता चलना चाहिये कि क्यों आज अरबों रुपये के विज्ञापन दिये जा रहे हैं? सरकार ऐसी व्यवस्था करे ताकि जनता समझे कि तेल बचाने में ही फायदा है।

सभापति महोदया, अभी चन्द सालों पहले कुछ प्राइवेट कम्पनियां तेल के क्षेत्र में सरकारी कम्पनियों के कम्पीटीशन में आई हैं। मैंने देखा है कि प्राइवेट कम्पनियां तेल में कमायी कर रही हैं जब कि सरकारी तेल कम्पनियों के आदमी मक्खियां मार रहे होते हैं। सरकारी पेट्रोल पम्पों पर बिक्री कम होने का कारण यह है कि वे लोग पेट्रोल में मिट्टी का तेल मिलाकर बेचते हैं और यह सब अधिकारियों की मिलीभगत से होता है। उपभोक्ता समझता है कि एक तो तेल में मिलावट है और दूसरे उसे तेल पूरा नहीं मिलता है। इस कारण वह प्राइवेट कम्पनियों की तरफ रुख करता है। जब सरकार बोर्ड का गठन कर रही है तो मेरा निवेदन है कि मेरे द्वारा दिये गये सुझावों के मद्देनजर जनता की भलाई के लिये बोर्ड में तेल विशोद्ध को रखा जाये।

सभापति महोदया, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से मिलकर और लिखकर अवगत करा चुका हूं और मेरे सामने इंडियन ऑयल कॉरपोरेशन के एम.डी तथा चेयरमैन से कहा गया कि नार्दर्न जोन में कितना भ्रटाचार है? यह भ्रटाचार कहां से शुरू होता है? यह पूरे हिन्दुस्तान में है। साउथ जोन में हुआ। नार्दर्न जोन में टैंडर में लोएस्ट बिडर को न देकर हाईएस्ट बिडर को काम दिया गया। यह सीधे तौर पर भ्रटाचार का मामला है। मैंने मंत्री जी से अनुरोध किया तो आफिसर्स कहने लगे कि ऐसा नहीं है। मेरा यह कहना है कि हम भी एफिडेविट देते हैं और वह अधिकारी भी एफिडेविट दें, जिसकी बात गलत हो, उसे सज़ा दी जाये। मुझे मंत्री जी के नेतृत्व पर पूरा विश्वास है और आशा है कि वह इस पर कार्यवाही करेंगे।... (व्यवधान)

सभापति महोदया : आप मेन-मेन पाइंट्स दे दें और अपनी बात समाप्त करें।

श्री ब्रजेश पाठक : सभापति महोदया, मैं वही दे रहा हूं। यह बहुत ही गम्भीर मामला है। आप भी जानती होगी। जब भ्रटाचार परवान चढ़ता है तो उसका धुंआ आकाश की तरफ जाता है। सरकार इस ओर ध्यान दे। इसके अलावा गरीब जनता के लिये पूरे हिन्दुस्तान में मिट्टी के तेल के वितरण के लिये डिपो बना दिये गये हैं जहां कोटेदार अपना माल लेकर गांवों में जाता है। उस मिट्टी के तेल से गरीब आदमी अपना स्टोव और लालटेन जलाता है। लेकिन यह देखा गया है कि कोटे का सारा मिट्टी का तेल पेट्रोल पम्प पर ले जाया जाता है। यदि कोटेदार दूसरी जगह ले जाता है तो जिलाधिकारी कोटेदार के उस लाइसेंस को रद्द कर देता है। मेरा कहने का मतलब यह है कि मंत्री जी को इस तरफ ध्यान देने की जरूरत है। पूरे हिन्दुस्तान में ऐसे डिपो बने हुये हैं जो भ्रटाचार के अड्डे बने हुये हैं। सरकार को उन पर अंकुश लगाना चाहिये।

सभापति महोदया, हमारे वाराणसी के सांसद ने बताया कि वहां पर भारत पेट्रोलियम के एक रीजनल मैनेजर को हटा दिया गया क्योंकि उसका काम यह था कि जो मिलावट होती, चोर बाजारी होती, उस पर कार्यवाही करता था। उस अधिकारी को हटाने का कारण और उस पर आरोप यह लगाया गया कि वह भ्रटाचार में लिप्त था लेकिन जांच के बाद उसके खिलाफ कोई आरोप सिद्ध नहीं हुआ और वह अधिकारी बेचारा अपना दम तोड़ रहा है। जो पेट्रोल पंप जनता का खून चूसने का काम कर रहे थे, वहां आज भी लगातार मिलावट जारी है। यह पूरे बनारस जोन का मामला है। मेरी आपसे और सदन के माध्यम से सरकार से अपील है कि हर स्थिति में यह भ्रटाचार रुकना चाहिए।

महोदया, एक मामला उन्नाव का है। इंडियन आयल का एक पेट्रोल पंप था। वहां के क्षेत्रीय बिक्री कर अधिकारी ने पेट्रोल पंप को इसलिए सीज़ किया, उसको निलंबित किया तथा फिर उसका लाइसेंस रद्द कर दिया कि उसके मांगने पर

दस्तावेज़ प्रस्तुत नहीं किया। मैं यह बात मंत्री जी के संज्ञान में लाना चाहता हूँ। उसी दिन उस अधिकारी ने उन दस्तावेज़ों पर दस्तखत किये हैं। यह बात पेट्रोलियम स्टैंडिंग कमेटी के सदस्य श्री राजेश वर्मा को भी मैंने बताई है। उस बेचारे पेट्रोल पंप वाले ने पैसे नहीं दिये थे और बिक्री कर अधिकारी ने उसका लाइसेंस रद्द कर दिया। वह बेचारा आज भुखमरी के कगार पर है। मेरा मंत्री जी से अनुरोध है कि इन दो चार बिन्दुओं पर, जनता की आवाज़ पर ध्यान देंगे तो हम समझेंगे कि ऐसा मंत्री आया है जो जनता की आवाज़ सुनना चाहता है। इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ और आपका आभार व्यक्त करता हूँ।

श्री काशीराम राणा (सूरत) : सभापति महोदया, आपने मुझे बोलने का अवसर दिया, इसके लिए मैं आपका आभारी हूँ।

सभापति महोदया : राणा जी, आप अपनी बात तीन मिनट में खत्म कर लें क्योंकि आपकी पार्टी के तीन मिनट ही बचे हैं।

श्री काशीराम राणा : महोदया, मैं मंत्री जी का ध्यान क्लॉज़ 4(1) की तरफ आकृष्ट करना चाहता हूँ जिसमें कहा गया है कि जो बोर्ड बनेगा, उसमें एक लीगल मैम्बर होगा और साथ साथ तीन सदस्य और होंगे जो भारत सरकार अपाइंट करेगी।

Clause 4 (1) says:

“The Central Government shall appoint the Chairperson and other members of the Board from amongst persons of eminence in the fields of petroleum and natural gas industry, management, finance, law, administration or consumer affairs:”

सभापति महोदया : अगर आप सुझाव देंगे तो आपका समय बच जाएगा।

श्री काशीराम राणा : मैं एक ही सुझाव देना चाहूंगा कि आज चाहे डिस्ट्रिब्यूशन का काम हो, ट्रांसपोर्टेशन का काम हो, अल्टीमेटली जो कंज्यूमर है, उस पर यह सब डिपैन्ड करता है। कंज्यूमर की आज जो भी कंप्लेन्ट्स हैं, उसकी कोई सुनवाई नहीं है। उसको एलपीजी नहीं मिलती तो वह कहां जाए। बहुत समय से कमी चल रही है लेकिन उनकी एलपीजी की समस्या हम दूर नहीं कर सके। इसलिए मेरा कहना है कि बोर्ड में कम से कम एक मैम्बर कंज्यूमर्स में से होना चाहिए। उसकी योग्यता जरूर देख ली जाए लेकिन जिस कंज्यूमर के लिए बोर्ड बन रहा है, उसका एक रिप्रजेंटेटिव जरूर इसमें लिया जाना चाहिए।

मैं क्लॉज़ 21 पर जाऊंगा जिसमें कहा गया है कि ...(व्यवधान)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Ranaji, your party's time is over.

श्री काशीराम राणा : इतना बड़ा बोर्ड बन रहा है। ...(व्यवधान)

सभापति महोदया : आप सीधे अपने सुझाव दे दीजिए।

श्री काशीराम राणा : यह अगर सही नहीं बना तो आज जो परेशानी है, आपकी भी परेशानी है और महिलाएं कहती हैं कि गैस नहीं मिलती। ...(व्यवधान)

सभापति महोदया : सदन की कार्यवाही यहां के समय के अनुसार चलेगी। आप एक मिनट में सुझाव दीजिए।

श्री काशीराम राणा : क्लॉज़ 21 में राइट टु यूज़ के बारे में कहा गया है। मैं मंत्री जी से एक्सप्लानेशन चाहूंगा कि इसमें जो भी रिमेनिंग कैपेसिटी का जिक्र है, उसको कैसे वितरित करेंगे, कैसे इसको राइट देंगे। आज हमारे यहां गुजरात स्टेट पेट्रोलियम कार्पोरेशन ने पाइपलाइन बिछा दी है। वह सब कुछ कर रही है। हम गैस मांग रहे हैं, लेकिन हमें गैस नहीं दी जाती है। पिपावा पावर प्रोजेक्ट के लिए हम गैस मांग रहे हैं। सरकार ने कहा कि मार्केट प्राइस से गैस मिलेगी। हमने कहा कि ठीक है। हमने सबसे ऊंची बिड की। सरकार ने कहा कि गैल को मिलेगी, आपको ज़रा भी गैस नहीं मिलेगी। इसलिए मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि यह जो रिमेनिंग कैपेसिटी है या क्वांटिटी है, वह किस तरह से आप वितरित करना चाहते हैं ?

मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि राज्य सरकारों को भी अधिकार देना चाहिए। आन्ध्र प्रदेश, गुजरात और महाराष्ट्र, जहां-जहां से भी गैस और तेल निकलता है, वहां पर उनकी कैपेसिटी को डिस्ट्रीब्यूट करने का अधिकार राज्य सरकारों को भी देना चाहिए। सरकार इसमें अपनी कंडीशन जरूर लगा सकती हैं। इससे यह होगा कि भारत सरकार के बोर्ड का जो बर्डन होगा, वह हम राज्य सरकार के ऊपर डाल सकता हैं। मैंने देखा है कि गुजरात में राज्य सरकार चाहती है कि वह डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन करे। जो अन्याय हो रहा, इसको दूर करने के लिए क्या इस क्लॉज़ में क्या आप कोई चैन्ज करना चाहेंगे या मंत्री जी कोई क्लैरिफिकेशन देना चाहते हैं।

SHRI L. RAJAGOPAL (VIJAYAWADA): Madam Chairperson, thank you for the opportunity given to me. I would like to commend the hon. Minister for introducing this Bill on the one hand and on the other hand I will give some suggestions to be incorporated in this Bill.

We need to recollect and remember that many people want the Government to protect the consumers. The main problem is to protect the consumer from the Government. That is the reason why we are moving from the controlled economy and controlled Government to the regulated economy and regulated Government. This Bill has introduced the concept of a Regulatory Board. I fail to understand, why it cannot be authority because authority has more powers and Government interference will be less.

There is a full chapter here, in clause 42, on the Government interference and Government powers, where it says that 'Not only on policy but on any matter, a directive given from the Government has to be implemented by this Board'. It means, this Board does not have the full authority and full powers to act on their own. The reason why we are moving on to this regulatory mechanism is that the regulator should act discompassionately, objectively, practically, taking into consideration all the factual situations so that they can bring about equitable justice in this society and in this country. For that reason we are talking about a regulator rather than Government control. When I talk about regulator, I fail to understand why we name it as a Board.

As far as the appointment of the Chairman as well as its members is concerned, in fact, there is a lot of judicious process, legal issue and logic has to be used when we have to bring about equitable justice to this country. So, it would be better if either a technical person or a judicial member should be on the Board rather than anybody having experience in finance or consumer affairs and all that.

Clause 43(2) says that in the event of taking over and control by an act of the Board, the District Collector shall determine the amount of compensation payable for taking over of the property. He will determine what will be the value of the property or assets. I fail to understand, whether a District Collector has the inputs of all these things. There has to be some mechanism under this regulator which can evaluate all these things.

I also fail to understand, when you form a regulator, why we should burden the regulator with dispute settlement. Dispute settlements take a very long time. Why should the regulator solve the disputes when we have an arbitrary mechanism available already in the law?

A lot of Members mentioned about the Head Office being in Delhi. I would like to know why it should be in Delhi. It should either be in Mumbai, Ahmadabad, Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu where there are gas and oil reserves.

The most important point that we have missed out in this Bill is not including the production of oil and gas. In fact, the cost of exploration, production of oil and gas is the most valuable thing and that gives us the whole input cost. By excluding that, we are almost eliminating 50 per cent to 70 per cent of the cost and we are trying to regulate, for Controller's sake, the prices for marketing, prices for transportation, prices for agencies and all these things. It is not a major issue.

The major issue today is that we have to break the monopoly. We cannot allow either the Government or the private sector to have a monopoly in any sector. That is the reason why this regulator should also include the exploration, production of gas and also oil.

As far as the Appellate Tribunal is concerned, you have mentioned that the member should have one-year experience as Secretary. We need to have a pure technical person in the Appellate Tribunal who understands gas and petroleum sectors.

Finally, I would like to tell the hon. Minister that today's conflicts not only in India but internationally also only arose because of hydrocarbons, gas and petroleum. Take any conflict that is taking place in India and in the world. They are taking place because of gas. So, I want the hon. Minister to think about all these suggestions.

I would like to recollect the words of Indiraji. Indiraji told that we cannot shake hands with a clenched fist. So, I want the hon. Minister to be open-minded, open-hearted and also take with open hand all the suggestions given by the Members, incorporate them in this Bill and rectify all the mistakes or the omissions that are there in this Bill. At the same time, I support this Bill.

श्री राजीव रंजन सिंह 'ललन' (बेगूसराय) : सभापति महोदया, पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस विनियामक बोर्ड विधेयक, 2006 पर हम आज सदन में चर्चा कर रहे हैं और यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण विधेयक है। यह बिल वास्तव में मई 2002 में सदन में पेश हुआ था और उसके बाद उसे संसदीय स्थायी समिति को भेज दिया गया। कमेटी ने एक वा तक मेहनत कर के उस पर विचार किया और एक वा के बाद मई, 2003 में उसे अपनी 50 से अधिक अनुशंसाओं के साथ सदन को वापस किया। चूंकि मुझे पेट्रोलियम एवं प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय की स्थायी समिति का सदस्य रहने का मौका मिला, इसलिए मैं जानता हूँ कि समिति ने बहुत ही मेहनत कर के 50 से अधिक अनुशंसाएं बिल में की थीं। तत्कालीन सरकार ने वह बिल दिसम्बर, 2003 में सदन में फिर से पेश किया। उसमें तत्कालीन सरकार ने स्टैंडिंग कमेटी की अधिकांश सिफारिशों को स्वीकार करते हुए, बिल में तदनु रूप परिवर्तन किए, लेकिन लोक सभा भंग हो गई और वह बिल समाप्त हो गया।

महोदया, इस सरकार ने उसी बिल को नया रूप देकर फिर से सदन में पेश किया है, लेकिन उस समय की गई कमेटी की अनेक अनुशंसाओं को समाप्त कर दिया गया है। इस प्रकार इस सरकार ने बिल का जो उद्देश्य था, उसे ही समाप्त करने का काम किया है। जो ओरिजनल बिल था, उसमें अपीलैट ट्रिब्यूनल बनाने का कोई प्रावधान नहीं था, लेकिन अब अपीलैट ट्रिब्यूनल के प्रावधान को बिल में जोड़ा गया है। इसलिए मेरा कहना है कि मूल बिल की भावना के साथ छेड़छाड़ की गई है और मूल बिल को नए चैप्टर के साथ पेश किया गया है। इसलिए हमारा पहला सुझाव तो यह है कि इस बिल को पुनः स्टैंडिंग कमेटी को भेजा जाना चाहिए क्योंकि जो बिल पहले स्टैंडिंग कमेटी को भेजा गया था, उसमें मौलिक परिवर्तन किया गया है। अब अपीलैट ट्रिब्यूनल की बात जोड़ी गई है। इलेक्ट्रिसिटी रैगुलेटरी एक्ट के अनुसार इसमें अपीलैट ट्रिब्यूनल की बात जोड़ी गई है। इसलिए इस पर डिटेल्ड एग्जामिनेशन की जरूरत है। विस्तृत रूप से समीक्षा करने की जरूरत है ताकि मालूम किया जा सके कि जो अपीलैट ट्रिब्यूनल पहले से चल रहे हैं, वे इफैक्टिव हैं या नहीं और यदि इफैक्टिव हैं, तो कितने। इसलिए मेरा निवेदन है कि इस बिल की मूल भावना से छेड़छाड़ की गई है। अतः इसे पुनः स्टैंडिंग कमेटी को भेजा जाना चाहिए।

महोदया, मेरा दूसरा सबसे महत्वपूर्ण सुझाव एडल्ट्रेशन के संबंध में है। उस समय कमेटी ने एडल्ट्रेशन का काम देखने की व्यवस्था इस बिल के द्वारा करने की अनुशंसा की थी और वह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण अनुशंसा थी। पहले मंत्रालय में एक एंटी-एडल्ट्रेशन सैल काम कर रहा था, लेकिन अब उसे समाप्त कर दिया गया है। इसी को ध्यान में रखते हुए समिति ने अनुशंसा की थी कि इस रैगुलेटरी बोर्ड को एडल्ट्रेशन का काम देखने की पूरी जिम्मेदारी दी जानी चाहिए। एडल्ट्रेशन के बारे में, मंत्री महोदय भी चिन्तित हैं। उनकी चिन्ता इस बात से प्रकट होती है कि उन्होंने लास्ट संडे को ही एक मीटिंग बुलाई थी कि एडल्ट्रेशन को कैसे रोका जाए। यदि एडल्ट्रेशन के काम को देखने की जिम्मेदारी इस रैगुलेटरी बोर्ड को दी जाएगी, तो इस पर नियंत्रण किया जा सकता है। इसलिए यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न है और एडल्ट्रेशन बहुत बड़ी समस्या है, जिसे रोकने के लिए कोई कारगर कदम इस बिल में दिखाई नहीं देता है।

महोदया, मैं पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय की स्थायी समिति का छः वां तक सदस्य रहा हूँ और समिति ने इस दौरान एडल्ट्रेशन के बारे में अनेक परीक्षण करने का काम किया। इसीलिए उस पर अलग से कमेटी ने अपनी रिपोर्ट दी है, जो केवल एडल्ट्रेशन की समस्या से निपटने के बारे में ही है। इसलिए मेरा कहना है कि एडल्ट्रेशन के काम को देखने की जिम्मेदारी इस रैगुलेट्री बोर्ड को सौंपे जाने का प्रावधान लाना चाहिए था, क्योंकि अब देश में एडल्ट्रेशन रोकने हेतु एंटी एडल्ट्रेशन के लिए कोई व्यवस्था नहीं है।

तीसरी बात मुझे कम्पोजीशन के बारे में कहनी है। स्टैंडिंग कमेटी ने रिकमेण्ड किया था कि जो सर्च कमेटी बनेगी, वह कैबिनेट सैक्रेटरी की अध्यक्षता में बनेगी। उस समय जो दिसम्बर, 2003 में तत्कालीन सरकार ने बिल पेश किया था, उसमें इसको स्वीकार किया गया था, इसको एक्सैप्ट किया गया था और उस प्रोवीजन के साथ किया गया था। इन्होंने उसको हटाकर प्लानिंग कमीशन के एनर्जी मैम्बर की अध्यक्षता में सर्च कमेटी को बनाया है। मैं चाहूंगा कि मंत्री जी स्पष्ट करें कि कैबिनेट सैक्रेटरी की अध्यक्षता में सर्च कमेटी को हटाकर प्लानिंग कमीशन के मैम्बर की अध्यक्षता में बनाने के पीछे आपका क्या उद्देश्य था और क्या तात्पर्य था? इसके अतिरिक्त उसकी जो अर्हताएं हैं, जो क्वालिफिकेशन है, उसको बहुत व्यापक बना दिया गया है। हम सब लोग अवगत हैं कि जो आम तौर पर बोर्ड होते हैं, उस बोर्ड पर जो 60-62 साल की आयु के बाद आफिसर लोग रिटायर होते हैं, जो बड़े पदों पर रहते हैं, उन आई.ए.एस. आई.पी.एस. अधिकारियों का कब्जा हो जाता है। घुमा-फिरा कर आपने क्वालिफिकेशन को इतना व्यापक बना दिया कि इस बोर्ड के ऊपर भी उनका कब्जा हो जायेगा। वास्तव में यह होना चाहिए था कि चूंकि यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण बिल है, पेट्रोलियम सैक्टर में रिफाइनरी में, मार्केटिंग में, उसके डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन में, उसके फाइनंस में जो लोग थे, उनमें जो ख्याति प्राप्त लोग थे, उन्हीं को इसका चेयरमैन और मैम्बर बनाना चाहिए था, बजाय इसके आपने इसका व्यापक दायरा कर दिया। सरकार में लॉबी किसकी चलती है, इससे आप भी अवगत हैं और हम सब भी अवगत हैं। अन्ततः इसका जो हश्र होगा, उसको भी आप समझ सकते हैं, इसलिए मेरा कहना है कि इसमें संशोधन की आवश्यकता है और उसकी जो लिमिट कर देनी चाहिए जो पेट्रोलियम सैक्टर के एक्सपर्ट्स होंगे, उनको ही इस बोर्ड का चेयरमैन और मैम्बर बनाया जायेगा।

इसके अतिरिक्त हम एक बात और कहना चाहेंगे कि मौलिक परिवर्तन की बात मैंने कही कि जो ओरिजनल बिल था, उसमें मौलिक परिवर्तन हुआ। उसमें ऑथोराइजेशन के चैप्टर को बोर्ड के एक्ट में जोड़ दिया गया। जो ओरिजनल बिल था, उसमें ऑथोराइजेशन का चैप्टर नहीं था। यह भी नया चैप्टर इसमें जोड़ा गया है। सरकार ने पूरे बोर्ड के गठन का अधिकार पूरी ट्रांसपेरेंसी के बजाय, पारदर्शिता के बजाय उसको सारा अपने हाथ में रख लेने का काम किया। इसलिए मेरा कहना है कि जो बोर्ड बनाने का उद्देश्य है, वह उद्देश्य सफल नहीं हो पाएगा और फिर कई बोर्ड जो इस तरह से काम कर रहे हैं, उसी तरह से यह बोर्ड भी बनकर रह जायेगा और जो उद्देश्य है, वह पूरा नहीं हो पायेगा।

इसके अतिरिक्त एक बात और कहकर हम अपनी बात समाप्त करेंगे। पेट्रोलियम सैक्टर में पिछले 2-3 वर्षों से जब यह बिल आया था और जब यह स्टैंडिंग कमेटी में गया था, उसके बाद पिछले दो वर्षों में अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर कई मौलिक परिवर्तन हुए हैं। कई कंट्रीज़ में ऑयल सिक्योरिटी की परिस्थिति पैदा हुई है, एनर्जी कोआपरेशन की बात हुई है और अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय स्तर पर जो रिकार्ड मूल्य वृद्धि हुई है, ये सारी चीजें हैं, इसलिए आज इस बात की आवश्यकता है कि उसकी सारी चीजों पर विस्तृत समीक्षा करके फिर से रिपोर्ट देने के लिए और फिर से उस पर समीक्षा करने के लिए मेरा सुझाव है कि माननीय मंत्री जी अगर इस बिल के प्रति गम्भीर हैं तो इस बिल को वास्तव में पेट्रोलियम रैगुलेटरी बिल के रूप में बनाना चाहते हैं, उसमें पेट्रोलियम पदार्थों के जो नियंत्रण का काम है, उसमें परिस्थिति पर आपने पूरी नजर रखने का जो उद्देश्य है, इसलिए इसको फिर से स्टैंडिंग कमेटी में भेजने का प्रस्ताव आप लाइये और फिर से विस्तृत तौर पर समीक्षा करके फिर से इसको पास करवाइये।

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (MIDNAPORE): Thank you Madam Chairperson. The Minister is present here. Before my speech, several Members have raised many points. I hope, everything would be addressed by the Minister.

Madam, it is correctly said that a good legislation had been brought in December, 2003, so far as I remember but it was lapsed as the House had been dissolved. The former NDA Government thought that there was a feel good factor and India was shining, and so a pre-poll was there.

So, that legislation lapsed. But it is very difficult to understand why such a good legislation is coming up after 22 months. Why has the new UPA Government, after coming to power, taken so much of time in bringing this sort of a good legislation? It is correct that that the Standing Committee has given several recommendations and most of the recommendations have been considered by the Ministry. That is correct but some new clauses are being inserted and these are all important. Technically and commercially, these clauses are very important. A point on city and local natural gas distribution network has been inserted. This type of new point has been inserted there.

Also, it is very correct and it has been mentioned here that there is an allegation of adulteration. It is very much there. Now, the private companies are coming to operate the pipeline set-up. They are also joining. I do not know what is the mechanism to address this problem. Not only that, how can the consumers know that it is free of adulteration? What is the technology available so that the consumers get to know this? The Right to Information Act was already passed here. So, what is the right of the consumers to know whether the gas or oil is free of adulteration? The main reason behind adulteration is the difference in prices that are given to kerosene, Naphtha, petrol, diesel, etc. So, this point should be addressed.

Now, I am coming to the composition of the Board. I do support the idea that technical men should be deputed there. This should not be a rehabilitation centre. This should not be taken as such. So, the technical men should be empowered. They should be promoted. They should be posted in this field also.

Also, we are having acute shortage of oil and gas that we have to import from abroad 70 per cent of the gas and oil. The former Minister, Shri Mani Shankar Aiyar used to move around the globe. Now, he is moving State to State. I do not know whether he will get the assignment in future to go village to village. But whatever he may be doing, he raised the hope, he raised the expectation of the country so that we thought that the India-Iran pipeline is very hopeful for us and it will be coming in the coming days. So I want to know the future of that project. The Minister will tell us about that.

Madam, about the question of the Appellate Tribunal, yes, in the original Bill, this was not there. So, what is the idea behind this? That should be clarified. I do not know whether the Standing Committee examined this idea. Naturally, this point has been raised here by the hon. Members that earlier this Bill was examined and scrutinised by the Standing Committee but the new ideas have not been examined by the Standing Committee. Now we are in the House and it has been brought before the House. So, I think the Minister will explain this. I am not against that Appellate Tribunal but he should explain what should be the right of the Appellate Tribunal.

There is a question of adulteration. Who will deal with the matter? I want to know whether the Board itself will deal with the matter or that Appellate Tribunal will deal with the matter. I am not taking much of the time. I think the Bill is a good legislation. I thank and I congratulate the Minister. If it is late, but better late than never. They have brought the Bill in this august House. We must support it unanimously so that it would be forceful and it will deal everything related to petroleum, natural gas, etc.

With these words, I thank you very much.

SHRI KIREN RIJJU (ARUNACHAL WEST): Madam, Chairperson I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

Since Dighboi days, Arunachal Pradesh and Assam have been a pioneer in oil sector, but slowly our importance is losing and finally the Bill proposes that the headquarters should be in Delhi. Some of my colleagues have also raised this issue. But I must say one thing that we have been a pioneer in this entire oil sector for a long time. So, why not, for the first time, for a change, one corporate office be located in North East? I would like to request the hon. Minister that if he is not able to give the main corporate or head office, then at least a branch office should be given at Guwahati for the North-Eastern purpose.

Secondly, the pipeline issue from Iran through Pakistan to India seems to be facing a lot of obstacles. How much thought has the Government given for a pipeline from Myanmar to India, as there is no 'Pakistan' in between? I do not think there will be much of a problem.

Sir, coming to the Bill, I rise to support this Bill because this is very vital for the nation. Madam, in the Bill, the prices of the natural gas and oil will be regulated by the Board. Now, what will happen to the commitment the Government has given in the production-sharing contracts signed for upstream oil sector wherein it has been agreed upon that the prices of natural gas will be market-driven and the crude oil will be based on international prices? Now, how will the Board regulate the price which is market-driven? The hon. Minister should clarify this point because this is very important. I find that this is very contradictory.

I appreciate the idea of a five-year term and there will be no double re-nomination except that a member can be nominated as a Chairperson. But what will happen if they are nominated after a gap or those who are original members will never be members again? Or after a gap can they be members again? This should be specified because the problem might come up later on.

As regards the person to be in the Board, you have given that they have to resign from so many posts. But I feel that non-governmental organisations should be excluded and non-profitable NGOs should be excluded from this bar. They should at least be allowed to hold. This is not a profit-making portfolio. So, that should be allowed. That is what I feel.

In clause 10, I would just like to know from the hon. Minister what is the rank of the Secretary who will be the Secretary of the Board. I want to know whether he will be of the rank of a Secretary to the Government of India or a Joint Secretary. What will be the rank of that Secretary of the Board? That needs to be clarified.

In clause 12, where it is said the Board will hear and receive the complaints from any person to conduct an inquiry with regard to retail service obligations, marketing service obligations and all, there I would like to request to add the quality of products and services. That should be included. Anybody can complain when he finds that the quality is bad. That should also be included in the criteria where a person can make complaint.

As far as powers and duties of the Secretary are concerned, I feel that this should have been regulated by the Board. As per the Act, the power and functions of the Secretary are to be regulated by the Board itself. I feel that the Government should frame the rules and as per that rule, the Board should run. The Board should not be allowed to freely regulate what the Secretary is to do and where they have to hold meetings and how many times etc. It is all right that that part the Board can regulate themselves. But as far as the duties of the Secretary are concerned because the Secretary is very vital what I have seen from this Bill, they should be framed by the Government.

Lastly, after 65 years of age, he cannot continue as a member or after the expiry of his tenure, he cannot join any Government service or any of the corporate office or any office of profit. I think that will bar the dynamic, attractive and energetic people from coming to the Board. That bar should not be there. That bar should be relaxed. That is my request to the hon. Minister that we should try to attract more competent people into the Board to have a better and more efficient Board.

15.00 hrs.

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (SABARKANTHA): Thank you very much Madam Chairperson for giving me this opportunity to speak. I will not take much of the time of this House. I rise to echo the sentiments of the people of Gujarat over the demand for their share in the petroleum products. Gujarat was one of the early States where petroleum and gas struck and even now only five kilometres from my house the gas has struck. We have been demanding in Gujarat for a long time and I am sure the hon. Minister will take a note of this because, in fact, this has been going on for years. The people of Gujarat have been demanding that why should the headquarters of ONGC be in Dehradun and not in Ahmedabad or in any part of Gujarat. You have come with this Bill where it is written that the office of this Board will be in Delhi. I strongly resent that. It could be in any part of India but certainly not in Delhi because it becomes much bureaucratic and the other influences are there. As a result the number of States which have, in fact, contributed and from where the gas and petroleum are available, are suffering. You take into consideration the feelings of the Members, and especially those from Gujarat and I would request you to have the headquarters of this Board in any part of Gujarat.

Secondly, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to one point. We have been demanding for gas to our State. We have a shortfall of electricity of almost 3,000 MW in Gujarat and as a result, the industries are suffering. The gas is transferred from Dahej in Gujarat to Jagdalpur, from Salawa to Mathura refinery unit. All pipelines are being laid in every part of the State and gas is going to different parts of India but not in Gujarat. I do not know what is the rationale for this. We have been demanding that we urge you to give us a share in the production. Why can this policy not be adopted? We do not want money. You do not give us royalty. Let us have a share, 20 or 25 or 30 per cent share of the production and we will sell it.

In fact, the particular Gujarat State Gas Act which has been lying with the Ministry has not been signed. There is a conflict going on between GAIL and the company which has been formed by the Government of Gujarat. As a result, the ceramic industry, other industries including textile industry and dairy industry are suffering a lot. We want a solution of this. I do not know whether the Board will be able to handle this kind of things or not. If it is simply of distribution and marketing it is different. I hope that they formulate certain norms for distribution and so on.

I am not going into the aspects of adulteration and other things. A lot of other hon. Members have spoken on it. If I am not forgetting, there was a young engineer who went round in one of the petrol pumps in UP who had been killed. It was an inhuman act. There are such instances. I hope that this Board will resolve such issues. But, nonetheless, you resolve the demands of the State. Our entire water has been polluted. There is fluoride-related disease. You take out the gas, you take out the petroleum products in the entire North Gujarat. The land of

North Gujarat has become infertile as a result of this. I do not know why they are not compensating for this. Besides the royalty they should give us a development cess for the area. We contribute to the entire country's development. But why can we not get our share to develop our own State? That is my submission.

There was also an assurance given in the House by the then Minister to give us gas from the Tapti Valley. They formed a consortium to provide the gas to the people in Surat and other parts of the State. We have still not received that gas.

The other thing is about corruption. I must say that it is rampant. How the Board will deal with this, how the Government will deal with this are the questions. You take the small cases of giving dealerships of LPG to those whether they are tribals or belonging to Scheduled Castes and so on. Now the system is that somebody comes from Mumbai, goes in one of the hotels and in the early morning they call each of the people and then they decide there and then. I have very reliable information that they connive with the officers and they get the dealership, they get the petrol pump etc.

There is premium for all these things. Now how would you deal with this problem? There is no people's representative in the Board. The unfortunate part is that we have the same sort of life. We have not been able to form the Human Rights Commissions in a number of States, partly because there is a requirement that there should be an ex-judge, there should be the consent of the Leader of the Opposition and so on and so forth. Here is the same thing. You put the judges, you put the bureaucrats as if bureaucrats are experts of everything. Yesterday he was in the Police Department as Secretary and then he is shifted and made Commercial Manager of the Board. He will take the entire things into his hands and the Board will make profit! I do not understand it. What kind of a logic we apply in formulating such things where we do not trust people's representative, thinking that they will create a mess or they will give some kind of favours? I say with great humility that the politicians are the most scrutinised species of the people in public life and not the bureaucrats. Are we going to give support to this thing? I think, you should just consider it and try to find solutions to this problem. An MP just cannot make to the Board.

Madam, let me cite an example. One of the tribal persons for the first time wanted a dealership of LPG. I did not know who to contact. I telephoned. He said, 'Sir, the system is that the ONGC gives an envelope to some officer of the Mumbai Office and that officer comes next morning. Those five or six people interview and decide about it.' There is a definite information that in-between are the people who deal with officers and these dealers. If you give them money, you get dealership. If you do not give money, you do not get dealership, whether you are an SC, ST and so on. My question is this. With this Board, how would you deal with these problems? There are people belonging to SC, ST and OBC who want to go higher in the social hierarchy. I want to know whether they will get justice out of it. I would like to request you that when you give reply, please try to find some solutions to these problems, either in rules or in other mechanism. If the rules have to be amended after some time and you have to put it into the rules, please do it. That is my concern.

For three days, people have been raising the issue of Jatropha. In Maharashtra and other areas, there are lot of NGOs and young engineers who have been trying to promote it, but the State Governments are not giving them any encouragement, so is your Ministry. Are you going to find out some other alternative because energy will be in great demand? As more and more years pass, energy will be the first thing the people will be demanding, whether it be electricity, gas ... *(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): Ethanol is new addition to Jatropha. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY : I hope, this is taken up by your Ministry.

Nonetheless the last thing I would say is that please try to satisfy the people. The long-pending requirements have created discontentment among the people of our State. We feel that we have been victimised and injustice has been done to us by the Ministry of Petroleum.

Shri Rana has just referred to Pipavav Gas Project. I do not know what is wrong with that. Why can we not get gas for that? Why can electricity not be generated there? There are lot of people who are trying to set up industry in Gujarat, but because of lack of energy, we have not been able to do it. We collect almost 80 per cent of our own Budget from the State itself. We hardly get 20 per cent from the Union Government to run our State. So, my humble request to both the Ministers in your Department is to please look at these issues. ... *(Interruptions)* I am also telling you. I hope, we do not change with you.

Since the ONGC headquarters is in Dehradun and you are from Mumbai, at least it will not go to Mumbai, but you please try to set up this office anywhere else and also try to see and find out some mechanism whereby the common people who have grievances, their grievances can be redressed. You also address the very issues and concerns of all those States where the natural gas and petroleum is available because it creates unnecessarily a different kind of feeling among the old people in the Administration.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (MUVATTUPUZHA): Thank you, Madam. The first and foremost thing -- whenever we speak about petroleum -- which comes to the mind of the common man is regarding the price of petrol, diesel, LPG, etc. I do not know how far this Regulatory Authority is going to be concerned with the regulation of prices.

I find in clause 11 (f), in respect of notified petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas that monitoring the prices is one of its functions. On the other hand, if we look at the definition of the notified petroleum, then it is limited to all that is being notified by the Central Government. I do not know whether its hands are strong enough and long enough to control the prices of petrol, diesel, etc.

We are all concerned with the report that has recently come in the Rangarajan Committee's Report. I have referred to this matter in the Parliament earlier also. I think that this would be an opportunity for the hon. Minister to state the policy of the Government, and to clearly state the view of the Government with regard to the recommendations made by the Rangarajan Committee. The Report of the Committee says that the price of petrol, diesel, LPG, etc. are to be raised. The price of petrol and diesel are to be raised by less than Rs. 2, and for LPG or domestic cooking gas to about Rs. 75 per cylinder. Therefore, the country is very much concerned about this issue, and the common people would like to know whether the Government is going to accept it, reject it or going to consider it. I hope -- whatever way it is going to be considered -- it would be a very good opportunity for the House to know about the issue.

One more point with regard to the Regulatory Authority is this. We often find that whenever a Regulatory Authority is formed or made, the Government sometimes gets away from its duty to ensure that the prices -- as far as the common man is concerned -- are actually regulated. I feel that the Board or the Regulatory Authority is sometimes made a scapegoat. I do not know whether that would happen here also.

As far as the powers that are given to the Board are concerned, it is not a condition, and it is not that independent too. It is only a Board. We also find in clauses 11, 13, 42, etc. that many of the powers of the Government are still very much there to control the way in which the Board can act. For example, in clause 42, directions can be given to the Board. Of course, it may be necessary at times also.

In clause 11(j) I find that the Central Government can give recommendations or suggestions in the form of directions for the Board to accept. In this clause also, we find that the real control, eventually, comes to the Government only. However, in clause 13 with regard to judicial powers, the powers like court are given to the Board itself. I think, these matters are to be clarified by the hon. Minister in his reply.

As regards the issue of exploration, of course, it does not come directly under the Board, but we find that that is also a matter to be regulated under it. Many private companies are engaged in exploration, and in getting oil from the shores.

I would like to make a point here with regard to the Cochin High. I think that a lot of work was being done there, and there are reports that a lot of oil is available in the offshore near Cochin. A lot of work was being done there, but I think that it was stopped at a particular point.

Though there are reports that further drilling was done and oil was almost available, we would like to know the exact position with regard to this matter.

With regard to imports and exports, I think, section 14 gives the powers to the Board to do something regarding imports. These are also to be clarified a little.

I do not want to take much time of the House, though there are other points to be made. I hope the new Minister will be able to give a reasonable hope as far as the common man is concerned. It should not be a mere hope because the hon. Minister is a man of action. I congratulate the new hon. Minister who has moved this Bill.

PROF. M. RAMADASS (PONDICHERY): Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for the opportunity given to me. On behalf of my Party PMK, I support this momentous Bill.

As we all know, petroleum products occupy a pivotal role in the life of the economy as well as individuals. Therefore, its production, supply, distribution and determination of price play an important role in the acceleration of economic development of this country. I support this Bill because it is based on important objectives and goals. It tries to protect the interests of the consumers, tries to protect the interests of the entities, ensures uninterrupted supply in the market and promotes a competitive market for petroleum products. Therefore, I support this Bill. At the same time, I would like to indicate some of the possible contradictions in this Bill.

The first contradiction is that the Bill seeks to promote competitive forces or competitive markets for petroleum products. From a theoretical angle, competition prevails when there are a large number of buyers and sellers. In the case of petroleum, we have a large number of buyers, but the sellers are only a few. Therefore, we have only a monopolistically competitive market rather than a competitive market. Competition prevails or flourishes when there is absence of regulation or controls. How will you promote competition when you have a regulatory board? When there is a regulatory board, it will influence the supply, prices and monitoring aspect in some form or the other. Therefore, the invisible hand that is supposed to determine the prices of the products in a competitive market will be absent in case of regulation. This is an apparent contradiction.

The second contradiction or overlapping is that this Board will try to monitor the prices as well as restrictive practices in the market. But already this function is being performed by the Competition Commission, which was created in 2003 under the Competition Act of 2002. When the Competition Commission looks into the monopoly trade and restrictive practices of all the products, including the petroleum, how will this regulatory board perform that function? This has to be either taken away from the Competition Commission or it has to be clearly stated that as far as this product is concerned, the Board alone will deal with it.

The third important issue, Madam, is with regard to the measures of the Bill. Currently the entity owning a transmission pipe will not have an obligation to keep it open for any other person. But the Bill says that it will become a common or contract carrier. But what is the basis on which the individual entity which owns the transmission line will be converted into a contract or common carrier? This is not clearly mentioned in the Bill.

The fourth important issue is how the tariffs for transmission of natural gas through a common or contract carrier are to be determined by the Board. The details on how the tariff will be determined is not mentioned in the Bill. On what basis, whether on the basis of cost of service, cost of operations or the cost of any other thing, is not clearly mentioned in this Bill, and it has to be taken into account.

Coming to retail service obligation, currently, the Weights and Measures Department or the Civil Supplies Department in each State determines the quantity and quality of the products sold through retail outlets. Now, the Bill says that the Regulatory Board will regulate these retail outlets. What is the mechanism by which the Regulatory Board is going to do it? It is a national organisation. Will it be able to work at the ground level or at the retail level? How is it going to do this? What is the mechanism by which it is going to provide these retail service organisations?

Further, there is going to be a common regulator, both for electricity and petroleum? Both are complementary and competitive with each other. Electricity is developed with the help of petroleum, and petroleum also helps in the promotion of electricity. Is there going to be a common appellate authority or a common regulatory authority is not known? If there is going to be a common regulator, we will have to bring about a constitutional change because 'electricity' is in the Concurrent List, where the State Government as well as the Central Government can have a say. But 'petroleum' is in the Union List. There also, you find 'electricity' in one department, and 'petroleum' in another department within the Union List. All these contradictions have not been overcome by this Bill.

With regard to the composition of the Board, I have only one point to say. Most of the functions performed by the Board are economic in character or commercial in character because it is going to refine, process, market, distribute and transmit – all these characters or functions are

in the range of economics or in terms of commerce. But among the five members in the Board, there is not even a person who is qualified in the matter of economic policy or economic analysis, etc. The Bill makes a special provision for a legal person. There should be a person, either in the field of commerce or economics. An expert on economics should be included as the member of this Board so that he will be able to give his views. There are a large number of people in the Indian Economics Service with high qualifications and competence. One of them should be made as a member of this Board so that all economic issues can be rightly discussed.

Another point is in regard to salaries and allowance. It is said that salaries and allowances will be prescribed. Prescribed by whom is not yet made clear. It has to be clearly mentioned there.

With regard to the Secretary, some people said as to what is his qualification. He is going to be a very important person in the Board. What is his qualification? Who is going to appoint him? The Board will not appoint the first Secretary. Maybe, the second and the third Secretary will be appointed by the Board. Will he have the voting rights? Decision in the Board will be taken by a majority of the persons who are present. When there are five persons and only three persons attend, how three members alone would decide? Therefore, I would feel that the Board should have at least 10 persons so that they would decide on critical issues.

Petroleum is an important product. There should be no discretion by anybody and the Board should function in an objective way so that it provides natural justice to people. Monitoring of prices by the Board is also doubtful because the prices of petroleum products are determined not by us but by the international markets. Whenever there is a crisis in the international arena, there is a crisis in the Indian pricing also. Therefore, how far this Board will be able to monitor the prices has to be decided?

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Prof. Ramadass, you have made very specific points. Please conclude now.

PROF. M. RAMADASS : Therefore, I support this Bill. It is a very important Bill which the country needs today. However, an enlightened Bill should be an enlightened development instrument for the country. Hence, I would request the hon. Minister to take all these factors into consideration.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (KALAHANDI): Madam Chairperson, I rise to support this Bill. There is nothing to oppose here. But we would like to be precisely clear when the hon. Minister reply to tell us as to what necessitated the forming of this Regulatory Board. Probably, import bills went up. It went up to \$ 26 billion every year. The crude oil price per barrel was not stable. There was a jump from \$ 28 a barrel somewhere in July last to \$ 61 a barrel at the end

August. Besides, *Navratna* companies in the oil sector want that the subsidies should be withdrawn now. Are they saying that the Government would pay subsidies? Would the Government agree to this? They want the withdrawal of subsidies as the ONGC companies are not doing very well. They starting losing. BPCL is at a loss of Rs.4,000 crore. Other companies also would become red with the internal oil scenario.

So, considering these facts, I think, he will get a Regulatory Board. But he should not please make it like a dealer selection board as the regions where a lot of corruption is going on. He should make it a genuine Board because now gas imports will also be there, gas distribution will be there and gas exploration will be there. They would be doing 8,000 odd kilometres of gas pipeline transmission. Then, a Tariff Policy has to be laid down in the Bill. I am not repeating the points, which have already been made. But there should be transparency at all levels.

Madam, I was reading a magazine of ONGC on ‘combating corruption’, where the CMD of ONGC Mr. Raha, in his Vigilance Awareness Week had said: “It is not enough to be honest ourselves, but it is an inescapable obligation on all of us to ensure that everybody else too practises disciplinary ethics.” He means, everybody to be honest. Within his organisation, he is giving an indirect message to the public also that everybody should be honest. In this regard, I would submit that when people are represented by this august body, which is the highest legislature of the country, which is the supreme body of our democracy, why should not a representative from the MPs of both the Houses be there so that they can put forth the grievances of the people?

Now, the *Navratna* companies want subsidies to be done away with. But is it possible to do away with the subsidies? Take, for example, kerosene. We are giving subsidies on kerosene; and kerosene is used by the poor people, the people below poverty line. So, is it possible to remove subsidy on kerosene? Now, kerosene is being adulterated for diesel. Moreover, there is a lot of pilferage in kerosene and diesel in the backward areas of the country. So, all these things need to be addressed. I would like to know from the hon. Minister that does he have any regional mechanism to look into all this? So, the regional mechanism in consonance with this Bill should be formed at the State level so that it can be properly regulated at the State level also.

Here, I would like to say that also the States should be encouraged in regard to exploration of gas and forming petrol and gas companies, like in the case of Gujarat. I have been reading the ONGC Report and the Infrastructure Digest for the last couple of months, but I am sorry to state that my State of Orissa, which is on the coastline and which has vast deposits of gas; in the Mahanadi basins where offshore gas deposits are there, which have been formed by the Reliance company but no action has yet been taken. The hon. Minister of Petroleum, who has just adorned this Ministry and he is a very efficient person -- we hope -- would direct the activities towards the State of Orissa so that the activities of oil exploration and gas exploration

may be upgraded. I am saying so because in the gas pipeline, which we are going to lay now, about 3,300 kilometres would be put in the Krishna Godavari basins. About 1200 kilometres of pipeline have already laid out in Gujarat, and the balance is there. So, I would request to the hon. Minister of Petroleum to make a modest start about this new gas pipeline. At least, 1,000 kilometres should be started in the Mahanadi basins and offshore Orissa. Orissa is rich in minerals as well as coal. But coal methane gas is not a subject concerning the Ministry of Petroleum. It concerns the Ministry of Coal or alternative energy, which is under the Ministry of Renewable Energy.

Now, the public enterprises that are saying now to do away with the Government subsidies have a public obligation; they have a social obligation; and they are not private enterprises. So, they must put in more money for R&D in the sector of energy renewal, in the sector of development of coal methane gas because they have been enjoying the profits for the last 45 to 50 years.

Madam, there is nothing to oppose the Bill. It is a welcome Bill. It was first introduced during the regime of the NDA Government. Though the Revised version of the Draft on gas pipeline policy was made public in October 2004, I do not know why it was delayed in getting forward the legislation because gas is a very strategic sector. It is a very strategic sector. It is a very important infrastructural need for us to achieve a growth rate of 10 per cent eventually.

SHRI B. MAHTAB (CUTTACK): At the outset, I should say that I am not the lead speaker for my Party; our main speaker has already spoken, but I would like to raise certain issues for the consideration of the hon. Minister.

The Minister is new, but he has experience as a very able Parliamentarian. When we are discussing about petroleum, we are aware that petroleum is slippery and at the same time very much inflammable. With his expertise, I do hope and expect that he is going to pilot very ably the Ministry in the days to come.

While going through the mid-term appraisal of the Tenth Five Year Plan, I found out this. It is mentioned that the current indigenous production of crude oil is about 33 million tonnes whereas the requirement is about 120 million tonnes. Import dependence is therefore very large and is expected to increase over a period of time. It is stated that India's current balance recoverable resources of crude oil may last only for about 22 years at the current rate of production, unless accretion exceeds the current rate of production. Why I am saying this is that we need more investment in the upstream sector. There is a thrust that were identified in the Tenth Plan were four in number. The first was market-determined pricing mechanism for crude

oil and petroleum products; the second was rationalisation of taxes and duties; the third was restructuring of the sector and the fourth was establishment of an independent regulatory regime.

This was the proposal of the Tenth Five Year Plan. Accordingly, the regulatory regime came into being and a Bill was proposed; it went to the Standing Committee; subsequently it was placed in the Rajya Sabha and now we are discussing it here today.

The idea therefore was mooted in the Tenth Plan. Accordingly the Bill which has been prepared is to provide for setting up of a Regulatory Board, to protect the interests of the consumers and entities engaged in such activities. The Government has reportedly said that the Board would ensure – this is very interesting – uninterrupted and adequate supply of petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas in all parts of the country and promote competitive markets. These are the two major aspects which this Board is going to look after and repeatedly the Petroleum Minister – the previous Minister also – has said both in the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha that these are the two main components for which this Board is going to function. I have my doubts here.

I do not see in the Bill how competitive markets will be promoted by the Board. Therefore, my question is whether the Government is abdicating its responsibilities in monitoring to ensure uninterrupted and adequate supply of petroleum and natural gas. My second question is relating to another aspect. We have a Competition Commission of India. We also have read in the newspaper – and a Ministerial Committee also went into it – regarding the super regulator. It is because two other Ministries are also involved to look after competition activities of different organisations, which is responsible for promoting and sustaining the competition in the market and to protect consumers interests. So, the status of CCI has to be maintained. The overall power to examine anti-competitive practice would rest with the CCI. This is the policy and this is the law. I would like to know on the autonomy of the proposed Board, which is being proposed now.

To regulate prices and its capability to protect the interest of the consumers, have the Ministry of Chemical and Fertilisers and the Ministry of Company Affairs accepted the autonomy of the Board? What is its capability in fostering competition?

Thirdly, there is a proposal that the Board would oversee downstream oil refining and marketing of petroleum products, natural gas sales and transportation of gas and pipeline. It is stated that the Board would operate at an arms length from the Central Government.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. Your Party time was over and it is bonus time which is being given to you.

SHRI B. MAHTAB : Madam, I can expect bonus only from you.

Petroleum is a Central subject. As far as I understand, the Bill does not give that much of independence to the Board.

The last point which I would like to mention here is that when consumption of petroleum product is increasing, there is a need to increase exploration and to acquire equity share in production of oil and gas overseas. But the Board which is being formed has a little role to play in up stream regulation. The Mid-Term Appraisal of Tenth Five Year Plan had suggested to have an independent regulation in both upstream and downstream segments. When we are going to have a downstream regulation board, what steps are being taken for upstream regulatory board?

श्री आलोक कुमार मेहता (समस्तीपुर) : सभापति महोदया, आपने मुझे बोलने के लिए दो मिनट का समय दिया है, पार्टी की स्ट्रैन्थ के हिसाब से थोड़ा और समय देते तो बहुत अच्छा होता। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री से अर्ज करना चाहता हूँ और कुछ सुझाव देना चाहता हूँ कि जो रेगुलेटरी बोर्ड का प्रपोजल और उससे संबंधित बिल है, उसमें आम जनता की भलाई की बातों पर ध्यान देने की जरूरत है और कंज्यूमर एंड पर जो कठिनाइयाँ आती हैं, इन सब बातों का ख्याल रखा जाना चाहिए। जैसे हमारे देश में किसान वर्ग पैट्रोलियम प्रोडक्ट्स का बहुत इस्तेमाल करते हैं। लेकिन जितने भी पैट्रोल पम्प अभी तक असाइन किये गये हैं, जब उनके साइट सलैक्शन का मामला आता है तो सारी कमर्शियल साइट्स शहरों में देखी जाती हैं और वहीं उनकी स्थापना की जाती है। इसलिए रेगुलेटरी बोर्ड के माध्यम से इस पर अंकुश लगाया जाना चाहिए।

महोदया, गैस सिलेन्डर्स के बारे में बहुत सी शिकायतें आती हैं। हर कंज्यूमर तराजू लेकर नहीं बैठा होता कि वह सिलेन्डर का वजन तौलकर देखे। इसलिए इस पर कंट्रोल करने के लिए कोई सिस्टम डैवलप होना चाहिए। गैस सिलेन्डरों के फटने की शिकायतें भी बहुत आती हैं, जिसके कारण बहुत से हादसे होते रहते हैं। इसकी एक बड़ी वजह नकली और अनअपूड सिलेन्डरों का बाजार में होना है। इनकी टैस्टिंग के लिए हमारे पास पर्याप्त मात्रा में प्लान्ट नहीं हैं या अभी तक जो सिस्टम हमारे पास है, उस पर कोई विशेष ध्यान नहीं दिया जाता है। इसलिए इस पर कंट्रोल करना बहुत आवश्यक है। सरकार टैस्टिंग प्लान्ट्स को अपने कंट्रोल में रखे तथा पीरियोडिकली हर सिलेन्डर की टैस्टिंग उसके थ्रू कराने की व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिए। इसके अलावा ऑयल आउटलैट पर कैलिब्रेशन की प्रॉब्लम रहती है। गलत कैलिब्रेशन के कारण आउटलैट पर पैट्रोल और डीजल कम मात्रा में दिया जाता है। कंज्यूमर के पास ऐसा कोई इक्युपमेंट नहीं है कि वह इसे मैजर कर सके। जो मीटर में आता है, उसे वही रिसीव करना होती है। इसलिए बड़ी मात्रा में जटरोफा को पूरे देश में लगाया जा रहा है। सरकार जटरोफा का पौधा लगाने के लिये लोगों को प्रोत्साहन दे रही है। जब यह पौधा 3-4 साल में बड़ा होगा तो उसमें बीज आने लगेंगे, फिर उस में से डीजल निकालने की बात होने लगेगी। मेरा सवाल है कि इन सारी बातों के लिये रेगुलेशन हो सकता है, प्लानिंग हो सकती है कि वह किस के कंट्रोल में रहेगा? अनुज्ञप्ति का वितरण कैसे होगा, इस पर सरकार की चिन्ता होनी चाहिये क्योंकि यह सीधे तौर पर किसानों से जुड़ा हुआ मामला है। वह अपनी परती भूमि, वेस्टलैंड और उपजाऊ भूमि पर उस

पौधे को उगाये, इस प्रकार की अधिक अपेक्षाएँ उससे रखी हैं। यह भी मानना होगा कि उस से उसे लाभ भी मिले। इन सारी चीजों के लिये सरकार को प्रयत्न करना होगा लेकिन जो इकॉनोमिक्स है, उसके अनुसार उसे घाटा होने की संभावना हो सकती है। इसलिये मैं सरकार से अनुरोध करूंगा कि मंत्री जी मेरे द्वारा कही गई बातों पर ध्यान दें और रेगुलेटरी बोर्ड को अधिकारों से परिपूर्ण किया जाये तथा सारी व्यवस्थाएँ ठीक ढंग से की जायें।

इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं इस बिल का समर्थन करता हूँ।

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU (SRIKAKULAM): Madam Chairman, I rise to support the Bill. Energy is an essential requirement for the economic development of the country and also it is an important pre-requisite for improvement of the quality of life of the people. I, however, would not like to go into the details of the Bill.

This Bill was introduced during the regime of the last NDA Government and it stood referred to the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee had given 49 recommendations and of the 49 recommendations, 47 of them, almost all of them, so to say, have been accepted and incorporated in the Bill.

My first point is with regard to the constitution of the Board of this Regulatory Body that is being proposed. What I find here is that the Board is proposed to be filled by members who are all bureaucrats. My suggestion in this regard is that instead of having all bureaucrats in the Board the Government may include in the Board one or two members who are having expert knowledge in the field of, say, commerce or even management. There are many Members of Parliament who have such expertise in the field of commerce and even management. The reason as to why I propose this is because ours is a country with a population of more than a hundred crore and where about 30 to 40 per cent of our people live below the poverty line. So, if we have public representatives in the Board then the condition of the people as prevailing could be put up before the Board in a proper manner. In a democratic set up we should not depend only on the bureaucrats. I am not against bureaucrats. But if the hon. Minister could consider increasing the number of members in the Board and incorporate members, public representatives, who have eminence in the field of commerce and management, then it would be a good thing.

My second point is about adulteration. That is the most important aspect. Even now we have not been able to control adulteration. How would the constitution of this Board help in controlling adulteration is a question that the hon. Minister would have to answer. Kerosene is allotted to States under the Public Distribution System. According to recent reports, only 30 to 40 per cent of kerosene, of the total allocations made to States, is being distributed through the Public Distribution System and the rest of the allocation is either being sold in the black market,

or are being mixed with petrol and diesel. The cost of kerosene that is being sold through the Public Distribution System is Rs. 9/- per litre and the cost of petrol and diesel is around Rs. 50/- and Rs. 40/- respectively. There are some States where there is a lot of demand for kerosene. I would say for the State of Andhra Pradesh where there is a lot of demand for kerosene and the hon. Chief Minister also had written about it to the Central Government. Some other States of the North-Eastern region also are in need of kerosene. But even if they are being provided with 100 per cent of their quota, only 30 to 40 per cent of the total allocation is being distributed through the Public Distribution System and the rest are being sold in the black market. That is why this adulteration is taking place. This is one reason why the States are asking for more number of mobile laboratories whereby it could be checked on the spot and the offender could be penalised instantly.

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
DEORA): You had raised this point through a question that day.

(SHRI MURLI

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Yes. But that question could not be answered because the House got adjourned.

Madam, this Bill is confined in three areas, namely, it seeks to regulate the refineries, transportation, distribution and marketing, secondly, it seeks to protect the interest of the consumers and the entities that are engaged in this field and thirdly, it seeks to ensure uninterrupted and adequate supply of petroleum.

You are not including exploration and production for regulation. They should also be regulated here. Nearly 50 per cent of the cost goes towards exploration and production. Without adding exploration and production, we cannot achieve 100 per cent target. Exploration, production, refining, processing, storage and distribution should all be put under the control of the Board. Only then we can do something to the society and the poorest of the poor. So, I say that exploration and production should be regulated.

I will come to the issues pertaining to Andhra Pradesh. There is a request for augmenting gas supply to power utilities in Andhra Pradesh. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and GAIL have entered into an agreement for eight power projects. We require nearly 11.55 MCMD (10.2 MCMD firm plus 1.35 MCMD fallback). Already 7 MCMD gas is available. If 5 MCMD of gas is made available, the power projects will be completed. Apart from this 5 MCMD, the power projects are nearby completion and they are ready to produce power. If you do not provide gas to the power projects according to the agreement made between the Ministry and GAIL, we have to pay fixed charges to the power companies. As it is, the Electricity Boards are not getting profits. In this situation, the Electricity Boards will incur more losses and ultimately,

the burden will pass on to the people. That is why, we have to take firm steps and give instructions to GAIL to explore more gas. You have to plan to explore more gas.

We have a request to establish the LNG terminal at Krishnapatnam Port by Indian Oil Corporation. This is pending since long in spite of repeated requests by the previous Chief Minister, Shri Chandrababu Naidu and the present Chief Minister, Shri Rajashekhar Reddy. They have written at least five or six D.O. letters to the Government of India. The matter is still pending.

Another project is pending near Kakinada Terminal. I am requesting our Congress Members also on this issue. It has even come in today's newspapers. The Government is ready to establish the terminal at Kakinada but land is not available. So, my request to the Government is to provide 6000 to 7000 acres of land so that they will be ready to establish the terminal. I request the Minister to influence the Chief Minister to acquire land for this purpose.

Coming to LPG shortage in Andhra Pradesh, the waiting list has come from one month to about 14 days which everybody knows. We have given gas connections to 25 lakh people. Even the previous Government continued to do it. We have given 25 lakh gas connections to the weaker sections, the Scheduled Tribes, the minorities and the OBCs. That is why, the period of waiting list has reduced from one month to 14 days. Since Independence, we have given 30 lakh connections and in the last nine years, we alone have given 35 lakh gas connections under the programme. In this scenario, you may find that the demand is more and the supply is less. Even now, gas is not available. Earlier, when anybody applies for a gas connection, he used to get it immediately and the gas companies used to distribute it at the doorsteps of households. My humble request to the hon. Minister is to ensure adequate gas supply for the poor people so that they will get gas supply at their doorsteps.

SHRI SURAVARAM SUDHAKAR REDDY (NALGONDA): This is an important Bill. Main source of energy in India and the world is petroleum and Gas. As there are number of private players also in Petrol, Diesel, Kerosene and Gas production etc., it is said that a independent regulatory board is necessary to do justice to both public sector and private sector. I agree with the argument. But I have some apprehensions about the formation of board.

Though it is a independent body, it is and it should work under Govt. control. If the Govt. wants to increase the prices of Petrol, Diesel, Kerosene and Gas, it will through the responsibility on the Regulatory Board as if Govt. has no control over it. This is what is being done when electricity charges are increased on the name of mandate of Electricity Regulatory

authority. Right now the rise of prices is on cards of the Ministry as Shri Rangarajan Committee has recommended has recommended it. Please do not do it on the name of competitive market.

Whatever is the price more than 50% of it is due to different type of taxes. I understand that Bharath Petroleum is in big losses. This may be case with other companies also. This is all artificial losses. Taxes should be reduced to reasonable panel and make Petrol, Diesel and particularly Kerosene and Cooking gas at reasonable prices.

ONGC is investing terms of thousands of crores of rupees for research and for search of Petrol and Gas. But several fields after identification are being handed over to private companies. This has been done in Krishna, Godavari basis This should not be done in future.

ONGC is permitted to supply gas to general power plants in A.P. and now backing out. We had our doubts about the adequate supply of gas and argued before the A.P. Electricity Regulatory Commission against permitting new electricity generating plants on gas but arguments were not replied. Now ONGC

* The Speech was laid on the Table

should fulfil their commitment and supply gas to lower plants. Board should have technical personal and political representation through two members from Lok Sabha and one from Rajya Sabha should be included in it.

One Regional Office should be opened at Rajamundry as there is lot of Gas resources around it in Krishna, Godavari Valley.

Public Sector should play important role in Petrol Diesel, Kerosene and Gas, sale, refining etc., in future also.

श्री तूफानी सरोज (सैदपुर) : सभापति महोदया, पेट्रोलियम नियामक बोर्ड के संबंध में 13वीं लोक सभा में 6 मई, 2002 को एक विधेयक लाया गया था जिसे 17 मई, 2002 को संसदीय स्थायी समिति के पास भेज दिया गया था। कतिपय कारणों से इस विधेयक को एनडीए सरकार ने पास नहीं किया। इस विधेयक को पास न करके आइल कंपनियों को मनमाने ढंग से कार्य करने का मौका दिया गया। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी को इस बोर्ड के संबंध में कुछ सुझाव देना चाहता हूँ। जो आइल कंपनियों का स्वतंत्र सैलेक्शन बोर्ड बनाया गया है, वह रद्द करके सैलेक्शन की प्रक्रिया इस बोर्ड के अधीन करनी चाहिए। आयल कम्पनियों द्वारा मनमाने स्थान चयनित किए जाते हैं और मनमाने ढंग से काम किए जा रहे हैं। आज हालत यह है कि सभी आयल कम्पनियों के बीच में गलाकाट प्रतिस्पर्धा चल रही है। एक पेट्रोल पम्प और दूसरे पेट्रोल पम्प के बीच में दो सौ मीटर या तीन सौ मीटर से ज्यादा की दूरी नहीं है। एक कम्पनी दूसरी कम्पनी के साथ प्रतिस्पर्धा में काम कर रही है, जिससे विशेष तौर पर रूरल क्षेत्र के डीलरों में काफी निराशा पैदा हो रही है। ऐसा कानून बनाया जाए कि एक पेट्रोल पंप और दूसरे पेट्रोल पम्प के बीच में कम से कम पांच किलोमीटर की दूरी होनी चाहिए, जिससे कि रूरल क्षेत्र में उपभोक्ताओं और तेल कम्पनियों को फायदा हो सके, क्योंकि बहुत कम दूरी होने की वजह से डीलरों की परेशानी बढ़ रही है।

अनुसूचित जाति के लोगों को जो पेट्रोल पम्प अलाट किए जाते हैं, उसका सारा व्यय सरकार वहन करती है, लेकिन स्थान के चयन में ऐसा देखा जाता है कि कम्पनियों द्वारा जहां कम बिक्री की संभावना रहती है, ऐसे स्थान का चयन किया जाता है। इस कारण सरकार जिस पेट्रोल पम्प पर पैसा निवेश करती है, वह घाटे में चलता है और ऐसे तमाम पेट्रोल पम्प बंद करने की कगार पर हैं। ऐसे कई पेट्रोल पम्प लोगों ने वापिस भी कर दिए हैं। इसके पहले कम्पनियों द्वारा एक लैंड स्कीम शुरू की गई, जिसके तहत पेट्रोल पम्प आबंटित किए जा रहे थे।

सभापति महोदया : आप संक्षेप में बताइए।

श्री तूफानी सरोज : तमाम लोगों में इस स्कीम के तहत आवेदन किया था, लेकिन बीच में ही इस स्कीम को बंद कर दिया गया। मैं खास तौर से उत्तर प्रदेश के बारे में कहना चाहता हूँ कि इस योजना के तहत वहां जो पेट्रोल पम्प अलाट किए गए, उसमें एससी, एसटी के कोई कोटे का ध्यान नहीं दिया गया, खास कर हिंदुस्तान पेट्रोलियम ने दो परसेंट भी एससी, एसटी का कोटा पूरा नहीं किया है। जो बोर्ड में पद सृजित किया गया है, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी को एक सुझाव देना चाहूंगा कि वह एससी, एसटी का पद सृजित किया जाए।

सभापति महोदया : संविधान के हिसाब से पद आरक्षित किए जाते हैं।

श्री तूफानी सरोज : डिपो के बारे में डीलरों की एक बड़ी समस्या सामने आ रही है। टैंकरों द्वारा तेल की चोरी तो की जाती थी, लेकिन अब डीलरों की शिकायत है कि डिपो में भी तेल की चोरी की जाती है। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी को सुझाव के तौर पर कहना चाहूंगा कि ऐसी व्यवस्था की जाए कि डिपों में तेल की चोरी न हो और टैंकरों में ऐसी व्यवस्था की जाए कि रास्ते में तेल की जो चोरी हो रही है, उससे बचा जा सके और उपभोक्ताओं और डीलरों को सुविधा हो सके।

DR. K.S. MANOJ (ALLEPPEY): Madam Chairman, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to participate in the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board Bill, 2006. I rise to support the Bill. But I have some apprehensions. All these regulatory authorities, whether it is the TRAI or the Electricity Regulatory Commission or the IRDA, have been constituted

because of the introduction of private players in all these fields. Previously, these sectors used to be the monopoly of the public sector undertakings or the Government. The Government assured some kind of a service to the people. As far as the public sector companies are concerned, profit was not their only concern. Providing service was the sole intention of the public sector enterprises. But for the private sector companies, which are coming into these fields, profit is the primary concern. So, these authorities should ensure that these private companies fulfil their social obligations, especially regarding the quality of service, regarding the prices and regarding the subsidy given to the petroleum products, like LPG and kerosene. So, they should fulfil their social obligations.

One of the prime intentions of this legislation is to minimize the power and control of the Government to this sector. Autonomy should be there, and accountability also is equally important. Delegation of autonomy without accountability could lead to chaos. Therefore, appropriate mechanism need to be put in place to make these regulatory agencies accountable. The current provisions with regard to regulatory accountability are usually far from adequate. But I am happy to know that in this Bill, there is a provision to submit annual report of the Board before the House of Parliament. Madam, my opinion is that this report should be sent to the Standing Committee and deliberations should be made on this report.

Madam, another important point is that there are mushrooming of petroleum outlets in our country. In most of these petroleum outlets, young girls are employed as salesgirls. But they are not adequately paid. Even, minimum wages are not paid to them. So, I would request the hon. Minister that while considering the interest of the stakeholders and the consumers, he should also take care of the welfare of these poor girls who are employed in various petroleum outlets.

With these few words, I do support the Bill.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (CHIRAYINKIL): First of all, I would like to thank you, Madam, for relieving me from this job. Not only that, I also hope how long you will be there is a matter which future alone can decide.

MADAM CHAIRMAN : You are most welcome.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : It is because your predecessor who was with us got a ministerial berth and gone. I hope, that you may also get that job and go! That is another matter for the future to take a decision.

I rise to welcome this Bill. But it is belated. Now, the present Minister got the opportunity of initiating this Bill. His predecessor could not do it. So, the last ministerial berth brought in the change and he lost his portfolio, for reasons which I do not know. Perhaps, he may know it. All of a sudden, now, there is a tendency in the country for opening outlets at every furlong in the National Highway. How far this will be a successful attempt, I do not know. But lakhs and lakhs of rupees are being spent for opening an outlet. Some time before, only in junctions and important centres, outlets were available. Now, even in remote corners, where there are no vehicles for taking petrol, hundreds of new outlets are being opened. How it was sanctioned, I do not know. I am told that there is a Committee. I am not going into the details what transpired there. But my learned friend, the present Minister, he may all know it. He is very thorough with the procedure. Now, I would again suggest that ours is a country which is importing 70 per cent of crude oil. So, if we do not have the controlling power in the matter of deciding prices, whenever the Government is in difficulties, whenever the foreign exchange is in adverse position, the Government will be forced to increase the petrol every now and then. The common man is put to difficulties. That continues even today.

Now, the question I would place before him is that there is a countrywide pollution in petroleum products.

16.00 hrs.

In every outlet, either kerosene or some other oil is added with petroleum products and supplied to the consumers. That is our bitter experience. In every State, there is no controlling authority so far as I understand. Of course, there are some controlling authorities but they are not doing their job properly. More over, there is no specified standard for petroleum products.

We all know that in our country, adulteration has become the common practice. There is food adulteration. So, everywhere, there is adulteration. Naturally, in petroleum products also, there is adulteration. Hence, I would urge upon the hon. Minister to see that it is controlled.

This Bill is meant only for the simple purpose of establishing a Regulatory Board. For that purpose, the scheme of the Bill is in such a way that it is to establish a Board. The object of

the Board is to help the consumers. But the consumers are taking adulterated petrol every now and then even at every outlet.

The entity is defined in Clause 2 of the Bill. So, all these are the entities which will come under definition in this Bill. For that purpose, he must bring in some control, some mechanism for regulating them. ... (*Interruptions*)

Regarding the scheme of the Bill, I have to state one or two things. The Appellate Authority, constituted under section 110 of the Electricity Act, will be the same for this also as per clause 30 of this Bill. So, we have a common Appellate Tribunal for Electricity as well as Petroleum Products with the addition of a technical member to the Board. This is the provision in this statute. The difficulty is that whenever there is any dispute arising out of this, if any aggrieved party has to file an appeal, he has to go to the Supreme Court only. The High Court is completely excluded from the provision of this Bill. That will create a very difficult situation.... (*Interruptions*)

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Thank you, Shri Radhakrishnan. Please conclude.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : If you do not like, I would stop it.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: You have made every point. Now, one more Member is there to speak. Now, the Supplementary List of Business is also there. Papers to be laid on the Table of the House by Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : As far as the Appellate Authority is concerned, I have to make an observation.... (*Interruptions*) Recently, we passed the Information Act. There, we have created an Authority for the Central Government as well as the State Government. In my opinion, it is to make this an asylum for the retired bureaucrats. Here also, the Board will become more than an asylum for the retired bureaucrats. They can go up to 65 years.... (*Interruptions*) The tenure is for five years. The maximum age is 65 years or whichever is earlier.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Now, the Supplementary List of Business is there.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : So, I would say that this is a legislation which is primarily meant for the protection of the consumers. So, do not fill the Board with the retired bureaucrats.

With these words, I support the Bill.

16.04 hrs.

PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS REGULATORY

BOARD BILL, 2006 —Contd.

श्री संतोष गंगवार (बरेली) : सभापति महोदया, इसमें बहुत अधिक बोलने की आवश्यकता मैं महसूस नहीं करता, हमारे बहुत से सम्माननीय साथी इस पर बोल चुके हैं। जैसा अभी पूर्व में कहा गया था कि एन.डी.ए. की सरकार ने जो बिल था, उसमें अधिकांश बातें स्टैंडिंग कमेटी ने मान ली थी। अब जानकारी में आया है कि 10 से अधिक आपने उसमें नये क्लॉज़ और जोड़ दिये हैं। उचित रहता कि स्टैंडिंग कमेटी इसके ऊपर भी चर्चा कर लेती, विचार कर लेती। पर अब चूंकि राज्य सभा में यह बिल पारित हो चुका है और यहां पर मैं समझता हूं कि अब ऐसा नहीं हो पाएगा।

हमारे साथियों ने कुछ बातें बताईं। मैं संक्षेप में 2-3 बातें बताऊंगा। एडल्ट्रेशन एक मुख्य मुद्दा है और जैसा हमारे एक साथी ने कहा था कि इसके कारण विवाद भी होता है। उत्तर प्रदेश में आपके एक अधिकारी की हत्या भी हो गई, आप उससे परिचित हैं। यदि मिलावट के ऊपर आपने गम्भीरता नहीं अपनायी तो निश्चित रूप से यह एक बड़ी समस्या बनी रहेगी। इससे जुड़ी हुई ही एक बात है कि एनएच पर इतने आरओ बन गए हैं कि इनकी वायबीलिटी पर ही संदेह खड़ा हो गया है कि ये वायबल हो पाएंगे या नहीं। हमारा आग्रह है कि एनडीए की सरकार में प्रस्तुत विज़न 2025 पर आप विचार करें कि हमारी आवश्यकता क्या होगी?

आज गैस की मांग बढ़ती जा रही है। आज यह 150 एमएम सीएमडी है तो 2025 में 400 एमएम सीएमडी होगी। इसकी पूर्ति हम नहीं कर पाएंगे। आपने रेगुलेटरी बिल के अंदर कुछ परिवर्तन कर दिए हैं, जिनके बारे में माननीय सदस्यों ने आपको बताया। निश्चित रूप से कैबिनेट सैक्रटरी को इसका इंचार्ज होना चाहिए। लेकिन आपने इसको बदल दिया है। योजना आयोग में राजनीतिक आधार पर नियुक्तियां होती हैं। इस बारे में मैं ज्यादा उल्लेख नहीं करना चाहूंगा।

हमारे मित्र कह रहे थे कि आपको बहुत ज्ञान है। आप तेल की नीति जानते हैं, आप तेल के खेल को जानते हैं। मेरा अनुरोध है कि आप फॉसिल फ्यूल पर भी विचार करें। कॉमन कैरियर की सारी बातें आपके सामने आ चुकी हैं। नई पाइपलाइन एक्सेस कोड के बारे में भी आप विचार करें। यह बिल पास होने के बाद भी यदि कोई समस्या आती है तो हम उस पर विचार कर सकते हैं।

अंत में, मैं एक ही बात कहना चाहता हू कि आप इसकी एकाउंटिबिलिटी किसके साथ जोड़ेंगे? हम चाहते हैं कि प्रति वा इसकी रिपोर्ट पर सदन में विचार होना चाहिए। यदि इसकी कोई रिपोर्ट आए तो लोकसभा की उसके प्रति एक जिम्मेदारी हो कि हां, यह निश्चित रूप से लोक सभा में आएगी। इसकी एकाउंटिबिलिटी फिक्स होनी चाहिए। एनडीए की सरकार ने डिसेम्बर्लिंग के बाद काफी कुछ शुरू किया था, लेकिन अब सिनैरियों बदल गया है। उसके हिसाब से हम लोग सही दिशा में काम करेंगे।

इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करता हूँ।

MADAM CHAIRMAN : Now, hon. Minister to reply.

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson. Nearly 28 Members have participated in the discussion and I am very grateful to them for taking so much interest. I can assure you that we will look into the suggestions made by them and I will try to reply most of them now. If I cannot reply to some of them now, I will see that we will reply to you in writing within one week.

16.08 hrs.

(Mr. Deputy-Speaker *in the Chair*)

The unprecedented increase in the international oil and gas prices in the recent period and taking into account our oil import dependence, it is all the more important that the oil and gas sector in our country is regulated by a professional body. The countries which do not manage their energy needs in a professional manner are likely to face serious problems in their economic growth. I will like to quote from the statement made by hon. Prime Minister in this very House on 7th March on discussions on civil nuclear energy cooperation with the United States. The Prime Minister said and I quote:

“The House will appreciate that the search for an integrated policy with an appropriate mix of energy supplies is central to the achievement of our broader economic or social objectives. Energy is the lifeblood of our economy. Without sufficient and predictable access, our aspirations in the social sector cannot be realised.”

The efforts made by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas in enhancing the oil and gas security of the country include increasing domestic production under New Exploration and Licensing Policy (NELP), which was only announced earlier this month, and acquiring acreages abroad. We have acquired four-five properties abroad like in Vietnam, Sudan and Russia and they are doing good, they are doing well and whatever investment we have made has paid back already.

The third alternative is to import LNG through transnational pipelines. The last alternative, which several Members have suggested, is to bring gas to our country through transnational pipeline like the Iran pipeline. I would like to inform the House that only this week the Secretary of the Ministry went to Tehran to discuss about this pipeline. The Oil Minister of Pakistan himself came to Delhi last month and discussions are continuing regarding this pipeline. But there is another pipeline, which is under our consideration, and that is the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-India pipeline. We are seriously considering this and we are trying to implement it with the help of assistance from the Asian Development Bank. The third pipeline, which we are planning to have, is from Myanmar. It has some problems because we have to bring it through Bangladesh and we are finding other sources so that we can bring this pipeline through the North Eastern region of our country.

The Sixth Round of New Exploration Licensing Policy announced last month promises an attractive regime for seeking investments in a very transparent and objective manner. It is a matter of great satisfaction that despite tremendous increase in the international oil price in the last few years, the Government has not only been able to protect the consumers from increasing prices of domestic fuels, that is, PDS kerosene and domestic LPG but we have also been able to control the overall inflation which has been kept in check thereby benefiting the overall economy. We have hardly increased the price of LPG or rather the increase is very small and in kerosene there is no increase in price. The price of Rs. 9 per litre of kerosene is going on for so many years now. Nowhere else in the world the price of kerosene is so low. For instance, while the international oil prices have increased almost three-fold since the dismantling of APM in April, 2002, there has been no increase in the price of gas and kerosene and there has been no increase even in the price of domestic LPG.

The proposed regulatory board would essentially perform three functions. It would protect the interests of the consumers, attract investments in the sector and encourage competition. The increase in competition will benefit the consumers as has been the experience in other sectors. For example, as a result of increased competition in the telecom sector, the consumers have already benefited tremendously. Similarly, in the civil aviation area when there was only Indian Airlines, we all remember how we used to influence people to travel from Mumbai to Delhi and go back, but now there are 32 flights between Delhi and Mumbai. In the telecom sector, about 15-20 years ago, if we were to go to Mahabaleshwar, a small hill station

near Mumbai, it used to take one full day to get a telephone call through. What was the call rate then? It was Rs. 47 per minute and it is not even one rupee per minute now. So, when there is competition, the rates will be cheaper and the quality will be better.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Now we have the cheapest telephone tariff in the world.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Thank you. You are right. So, competition will help reduce the price in the oil sector also. If there is no competition and if we do not have private players, kindly imagine what would have happened.

Sir, hon. Member Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh made a suggestion for setting up a super regulator for the entire energy sector covering electricity, coal and petroleum and natural gas. While there is a need for having reforms in all these sectors, the suggestion to have a super regulator is not workable essentially on two grounds. Firstly, while the coal and petroleum and natural gas are in the Union List, electricity is in the Concurrent List under the Constitution. Secondly, each of these sectors have their own complexities and in case a single regulator was to deal with all these sectors, its role will become quite unwieldy, besides resulting in concentration of too much authority in a single regulator and so it is not workable.

Hon. Shri Suresh Prabhu, who is not here now, has raised the point as to why exploration and production are not covered under the Bill. Several other hon. Members also raised this issue. I would like to clarify that we already have a well-established legislation, which is called, Oil Fields Regulation and Development Act of 1948, and the rules made thereunder to regulate and develop hydro-carbon resources in the country. The Government has formulated a transparent exploration policy, called New Exploration Licensing Policy for regulation and development of hydro-carbons.

This NELP provides a level playing fields to PSUs, domestic and foreign companies. This Policy has been quite successful and is yielding rich dividends through discovery of hydro-carbons. Director-General of Hydro-Carbons oversees all these technical functions of this.

I am very happy to inform the House that large discoveries have been found in Barmer, Rajasthan. मैं खासकर रावत जी को कहना चाहता हूँ कि बाड़मेर, राजस्थान में जहाँ बहुत बड़ा ऑयल का भंडार निकल रहा है, वहाँ एक दूसरी 'शैल' कंपनी जो दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी कंपनी है, उन्होंने खरीदा था और उन्होंने ड्रिल किया लेकिन उन्हें कुछ नहीं मिला। बाद में यूरोप की 'केन' नामक एक दूसरी कंपनी को बेच बहुत ही सस्ते भाव में बेच दिया और आज कितना ऑयल निकलेगा कि आप समझ नहीं सकते। यह सारा हिसाब, वह कहते हैं भगवान का लिखा हुआ है। कुछ मालूम नहीं पड़ता कि किसमें से कितना ऑयल निकलने वाला है। In the Krishna-Godavari Basin also we have found large discoveries. These are good examples of that.

Hon. Shri Tathagata Satpathy, my young colleague, must be busy somewhere. He is not seen here.

SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY (DHENKANAL): I am here.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: He changed his *kurta*, so I could not recognise him. But I hope he does not say to which Party he belongs to. He wanted to know as to why the proposed regulatory board is called a Board and not a commission nor an authority. We have no love for the word 'Board'. One of the three has to be chosen, whether you have an authority, whether you have a board or whether you have a commission.

While the regulatory bodies for electricity and telecommunication carry the nomenclature of commission and authority respectively, we chose to call it a 'Board' considering that most of the public utilities are generally called boards. Irrespective of the nomenclature, the objective of setting up of a regulatory board remains the same. The objectives and the principles are the same.

Several hon. Members spoke about the constitution of the Board. A number of hon. Members, including Shri Jai Prakash, Shri Shailendra Kumar, Shri Ram Kripal Yadav, Shri Suresh Prabhu, stressed the need for a proper selection procedure for selecting the chairperson and members of the Board and inclusion of a non-official member to take care of its interests.

Clause 4 clearly lays down the qualifications for the chairperson and other members who are to be selected from amongst the persons from eminence in the field of petroleum and natural gas industry, management, finance, law, administration, consumers, etc. I wish I could say politicians also. There is no bar on the politicians.

श्री रघुनाथ झा (बेतिया) : इनको इंकलूड कर दीजिए।

श्री मुरली देवरा : हम पोलिटिशियन्स में बहुत रिटायर हो रहे हैं। कल राज्य सभा से बहुत लोग रिटायर हुए जो अभी बहुत ज्यादा कंट्रीब्यूट कर सकते हैं। मैं सही बात कह रहा हूँ, मजाक नहीं कर रहा हूँ।

श्री राजीव रंजन सिंह 'ललन' : सर, सबको इंकलूड कर दीजिए।

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, the politicians can contribute so much. So, this is under our consideration.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: In some areas, they can contribute in a better way.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, then the Search Committee is headed by Member (Energy), Planning Commission, who is supposed to be an expert in energy sector. It is, therefore, expected that only persons of eminence and having due merit shall be appointed as chairperson

and members on the Board. Also persons of eminence in the field of consumer affairs are already eligible for being appointed as member.

A number of hon. Members, including Shri Jai Prakash, Shri Shailendra Kumar, Shri Ram Kripal Yadav and Shri Tathagata Satpathy, raised the issue of adulteration, short delivery of products, etc. I would like to speak for three-four minutes on adulteration because even in the committees also some questions were raised on adulteration.

The real issue of adulteration is profit motive, based on price differences of the two products here and two products there. You have rightly said it, Shri Yerrannaidu. I would like to tell you that the price of diesel is Rs. 37.57, while the price of PDS kerosene is Rs. 9.05. So the price of diesel is four times the price of kerosene. Price of petrol is Rs. 49.16 while the price of naphtha is only Rs. 25. So the price of Petrol is double the price of naphtha. This is a great incentive for the people to get into adulteration. I can assure you that we are doing our best to see that the adulteration is stopped. Only last Sunday, day before yesterday, I called a meeting in Mumbai of all the Chairmen of the Petroleum companies, and we are trying to find ways and means. We have authorised more amount of money to them. We have told them to tighten their Vigilance Departments and they are all getting into it.

श्री तूफानी सरोज : अगर डीलरों का कमीशन बढ़ा दिया जाए तो मिलावट में कमी आ सकती है।

श्री मुरली देवरा : हाँ, यह सवाल पहले भी आया था कि अगर उनको इन्सेंटिव नहीं मिलेगा और उनकी कमाई नहीं होगी तो वे काम कैसे करेंगे।... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: No disturbance please.

श्री मुरली देवरा : श्री नायडू जी ने एक प्रश्न उठाया था। On that day the House adjourned. हमने वी 2005 एक नयी मार्केटिंग डिसिप्लिन गाइडलाइन्स बनाई हैं, जिसके तहत यह प्रावधान है कि जो लोग बदमाशी करते हैं या गलत करते हैं तो पहली इंसिडेंट पकड़ में आने पर ही उनकी डीलरशिप को टर्मिनेट किया जाएगा। यहां पर यह प्रश्न उठाया गया था कि क्या नया सिस्टम पुराने सिस्टम की तुलना में लूज है। जी, नहीं यह नया सिस्टम बहुत कठोर है, इसमें काफी सुधार हुआ है और आने वाले समय में और अधिक सुधार होगा। The State Governments have been given powers to enforce under the Essential Commodities Act and the Control Order passed thereunder. I am writing letters to all the State Governments to see that their Distribution Department uses the Essential Commodities Act which will keep a track on them. We are also doing one more thing, namely, technological efforts. There is introduction of new tamper proof tank truck locking system and GPS on trucks. It has been found that a truck, when it starts, is full, and when it reaches its destination, some quantities are already missing. We are trying to find the new locking device through which only now it can be opened.

Lastly, under the Jan Kerosene Pariyojana, which is going to work in the villages and gram panchayats, members of public, NGOs etc. can directly take. One of my friends here raised the issue of IOC sales officer shot dead by some unscrupulous petrol dealers. We have provided enough assistance to his family and also we will see that the guilty people are punished on this issue. This is what I have to say, as far as adulteration is concerned.

Whatever other suggestions the hon. Members have given, we will see that they are implemented.

श्री राजीव रंजन सिंह 'ललन' : आपकी मिनिस्ट्री में पहले एंटी-एडल्ट्रेशन सेल थी, उसे आपने बन्द कर दिया। स्टैंडिंग कमेटी ने यह सिफारिश की थी कि रेगुलेटरी बोर्ड को एडल्ट्रेशन रोकने के लिए अधिकार दिए जाए, आपने वह सिफारिश भी नहीं मानी है। आप एडल्ट्रेशन को गंभीर समस्या मान रहे हैं, लेकिन इस पर नजर कौन रखेगा?

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Sir, in some States the Public Distribution System is strong and in some States it is not strong. Whatever allocation we are providing under PDS – out of Rs. 9 – out of that they are utilising only 30 per cent and the remaining 70 per cent is going to the black market. To avoid all these things, where there is a need we have to supply and where there is no need, we have to control.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, as far as the role of the Regulator in controlling adulteration is concerned, as per clause 11(f)(v) of the PNGRB Bill, the Board will provide, by regulations, and enforce, retail service obligations for retail outlets in respect of petroleum products. The definition of “retail service obligations” under clause 2(zk) include the obligation of dealers to supply specified quality/quantity of the products.

So, this may take care of it. Anyway, your suggestion is well understood, and we will be very happy to consider that. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH (BHILWARA): Sir, there was a suggestion that Kerosene can be coloured. ... (*Interruptions*) आपको क्यों तकलीफ हो रही है...(ब्यवधान) The Minister is ready to answer it. ... (*Interruptions*)

श्री मुरली देवरा : सिंह साहब, मैं जवाब दे रहा हूँ। मैंने अपने जवाब की शुरुआत ही आपकी बात से की थी।...(ब्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Vijayendra Pal Singh, this is not the way. First you should ask the Chair and get the permission. This is not the way.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing should be recorded except the speech of the hon. Minister.

(*Interruptions*) ... *

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, a few hon. Members drew the attention of the House about the shortage of LPG in their areas. At present, the Oil Marketing Companies are serving about 8.76 crore customers through 9,011 LPG distributors' network across the country. The 50 per cent of LPG requirement is produced by the Public Sector OMCs and 25 per cent is produced by private refinery, and 25 per cent of the total requirement is met through imports.

*NotRecorded.

I will tell the reason for the shortage of LPG. The country witnessed shortage of LPG during the months of October-December, 2005 on account of shut down of RIL refinery, and there was a fire in Mumbai High. But now the situation is perfectly all right. I know that still some people from Tamil Nadu complained to me, and they are repairing them. The Reliance refinery has resumed the production from 1st December, 2005 and the supply of LPG has reached normal levels. This is what we have been informed. I agree that still there are complaints coming and we are trying to see that such complaints do not come again.

OMCs are now reporting a waiting list of about 2.8 lakh consumers as on 15th February, 2006 and all efforts shall be made to liquidate the waiting list before 15th March, 2006. The Ministry is focussing on streamlining the distribution process in consultation with the Oil Companies to avoid any inconvenience to the consumers.

Sir, I have tried to reply as much as possible and I can assure the Members that for those who have not got their reply to their points, I will reply them in writing within one week.

With these words, I request the House to pass this Bill.

श्री लक्ष्मण सिंह (राजगढ़) : धन्यवाद उपाध्यक्ष जी, मंत्री जी से मेरा केवल एक प्रश्न है कि ईरान-इंडिया गैस पाइप लाइन का समझौता आप करने जा रहे हैं, आपके अधिकारी वहां जा रहे हैं, उस पाइप लाइन की सुरक्षा की जवाबदेही आपने पाकिस्तान को दी है।

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This is not concerned with this Bill.

SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH : Sir, I am making a very important point. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This is not concerned with the Bill.

श्री लक्ष्मण सिंह : पाकिस्तान में 45 प्रतिशत गैस स्वी गैस फील्ड से आती है, जिसकी पाइप लाइन को ब्लूचिस्तान में तोड़ दिया गया है। जब पाकिस्तान अपनी पाइप लाइन की सुरक्षा नहीं कर सकता तो हमारी गैस पाइप लाइन की सुरक्षा कैसे करेगा? अगर आप म्यांमार से गैस पाइप लाइन बिछाते हैं और नार्थ-ईस्ट होते हुए आती है, तो वह क्षेत्र काफी विकसित होगा, वह ठीक रहेगा। इसके अलावा ईरान ने 20 प्रतिशत रेट भी बढ़ा दिया है, जबकि पूर्वोत्तर क्षेत्र से लाने में कम खर्चा भी आएगा। ... (व्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: This is not concerned with the Bill. Please sit down. Do not record further.

(*Interruptions*) ... *

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is no need to reply.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, it is a suggestion for action. We will consider it.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH : Sir I have a very specific question to the Minister and this is just a suggestion. I am not trying to criticise or do anything of that kind. Why do you not have coloured kerosene, like you have red coloured kerosene, so that whenever there is a mixing of the kerosene, we will get to know? It is not difficult to put colour into it. Every time anybody mixes anything, we will get to know that. So, it is a very simple way of doing it. It is the officials who do not want to do it because they are involved in adulteration. That is the point.

श्री राजीव रंजन सिंह 'ललन' : उपाध्यक्ष जी, मैंने माननीय मंत्री जी से डिबेट में यह सवाल जानना चाहा था कि जो टेलीफोन रैगुलेटरी बिल था वह वॉ 2002 में पेश हुआ था उसमें फंडामेंटल बदलाव कर दिये गये, वह क्यों कर दिये?

SHRI MADHUSUDAN MISTRY (SABARKANTHA): He has already raised this issue. This is a repetition. What is this?... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There is no need to reply. Now, Shri Ramdas Athawale.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Mr. Ramdas Athawale.

(*Interruptions*) ... *

- **Not Recorded.**

- श्री रामदास आठवले : उपाध्यक्ष जी, पेट्रोल और डीजल के जो रेट दिये गये हैं...(व्यवधान)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: You are not on your seat. First, you go to your seat. आपको पता होना चाहिए कि आठवले जी को तब बुलाते हैं जब डिबेट समाप्त करनी होती है।

श्री रामदास आठवले : उपाध्यक्ष जी, मेरी सीट आगे थी पीछे कर दी गयी है।

उपाध्यक्ष महोदय : अगर आप पहले रिक्वैस्ट करते तो मैं अगली सीट से ही बोलने देता।

श्री रामदास आठवले : आप मुझे अब आगे बुला लीजिए। सर, डीजल और पेट्रोल के रेट अलग-अलग राज्यों में अलग-अलग हैं और इनके रेट मुम्बई में बहुत ज्यादा हैं। पेट्रोल और डीजल के रेट हर स्टेट में एक होने चाहिए, इस पर आप कोई पॉलिसी बनाइये।

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (KALAHANDI): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I have one small clarification. My clarification is this. I would like to know from the hon. Minister about the policy on subsidy. What is the policy on subsidy? Subsidy is a big concern. Will they keep it? Or, will they withdraw it? It is because kerosene is highly subsidized. So, it should be continued so that the poor people would benefit.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Your suggestion has come.

The question is:

“That the Bill to provide for the establishment of Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board to regulate the refining, processing, storage, transportation, distribution, marketing and sale of petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas excluding production of crude oil and natural gas so as to protect the interests of consumers and entities engaged in specified activities relating to petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas and to ensure uninterrupted and adequate supply of petroleum, petroleum products and natural gas in all parts of the country and to promote competitive markets and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration.”

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

“That clauses 2 to 63 stand part of the Bill.”

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the long Title were added to the Bill.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The Minister may now move that the Bill be passed.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: I beg to move:

“That the Bill be passed. ”

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The question is:

“That the Bill be passed. ”

The motion was adopted.
