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Participants : [Satheedevi Smt. P., C.S. Sujatha Smt., Lakshmi Botcha Smt. Jhansi, Tirath Smt. Krishna, Maheshwari Smt. Kiran, Gandhi Smt. Maneka, Bhavani Rajenthiran Smt. M.S.K., Nayak Smt. Archana, Dasmunsi Shri Priya Ranjan, Mahajan Smt. Sumitra, Ranjan Smt. Ranjeet, Kerketta Ms. Sushila](#)

Title: Regarding International Women's Day.

श्रीमती सुमित्रा महाजन (इन्दौर): माननीय अध्यक्ष जी, आज अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय महिला दिवस है और इस दिवस के उपलक्ष्य में मैं सभी को हार्दिक बधाई देती हूँ, लेकिन हार्दिक बधाई देते समय मैं चाहूंगी कि इस बात पर भी एक बार गम्भीर चिन्तन होना आवश्यक है कि हर साल केवल हम महिला दिवस मनाते हैं, उस दिन बधाई देते हैं, उस दिन कुछ कार्यक्रम करते हैं और महिलाओं की थोड़ी-बहुत बात सोचकर फिर इन बातों पर पूर्ण विराम लगा देते हैं। फिर वही जीवन शुरू होता है और फिर वही सिलसिला शुरू हो जाता है जिसमें महिलाओं पर बढ़ते अत्याचार, महिलाओं की घटती जनसंख्या का क्रम आगे बढ़ता रहता है। ऐसा नहीं होना चाहिए।

MR. SPEAKER: This is not a debate. This is only a Reference.

श्रीमती सुमित्रा महाजन : महोदय, हमने जेंडरिंग बजट की बात भी बार-बार उठाई है। जब एन.डी.ए. की सरकार थी तब हमने महिला सशक्तीकरण का भी मनाया था। महिला पुरस्कार की स्थापना भी की थी। सबसे नीचे काम करने वाली महिला, जो गांवों में आंगनवाड़ी कार्यकर्त्री हैं, जो महिलाएं बच्चों का ख्याल रखती हैं, उन आंगनवाड़ी कार्यकर्ताओं तक हमने पुरस्कारों की योजना बनाई थी। आज जो सबसे महत्वपूर्ण प्रश्न बाकी रह जाता है वह है महिला आरक्षण बिल का पास होना। यू.पी.ए. गवर्नमेंट ने भी महिला आरक्षण बिल को पास करने की बात बार-बार कही है। इसलिए मैं चाहूंगी कि महिला दिवस मनाकर ही इस बात को न छोड़ें बल्कि महिलाओं के सशक्तीकरण के लिए महिला आरक्षण बिल एक बार लोक सभा में आ जाए। किसे उसका समर्थन करना है और किसे नहीं, वह सब सामने आ जाएगा। यही निवेदन है।

श्रीमती कृष्णा तीर्थ (करोलबाग): माननीय अध्यक्ष महोदय, आज बहुत ही अहम दिन है। आज पूरे भारत में महिला सशक्तीकरण की बात की जा रही है। हमारे सामने की बेंच पर बैठी हमारी बहन श्रीमती सुमित्रा महाजन ने बहुत अच्छी बात कही कि हर क्षेत्र में महिलाएं आगे हैं। फिर चाहे वह शिक्षा का क्षेत्र हो, खेल-कूद का क्षेत्र हो, हिमालय की चोटी को फतेह करने की बात हो या चन्द्रमा पर जाने की। हर क्षेत्र में, हर जगह महिलाएं पहुंच रही हैं।

महोदय, हम बार-बार आरक्षण की बात कर रहे हैं। मैं चाहती हूँ कि क्यों नहीं आज यहां जो माननीय सदस्य उपस्थित हैं, वे इस महिला आरक्षण बिल को पास कर दें। मैं चाहती हूँ कि जो सदस्य इसके पक्ष में हैं वे अपने हाथ उठाकर बताएं कि हम सब लोग पास करना चाहते हैं। यहां तो सभी माननीय सदस्य इस बिल को पास करना चाहते हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय, हमारे संविधान में महिलाओं को बराबर का अधिकार दिया गया है। जब संविधान हमें बराबर का अधिकार देता है और हम हर क्षेत्र में आगे हैं, तो फिर हम यहां क्यों इस तरह की बात करते हैं कि विधान सभाओं तथा संसद के दोनों सदनों में महिलाओं को 33 प्रतिशत आरक्षण दिया जाए। मैं आपके माध्यम से सभी से निवेदन करना चाहती हूँ कि महिला आरक्षण दिवस के अवसर पर महिला आरक्षण बिल को पास कर के महिलाओं को आरक्षण दिया जाए।

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI (BADAGARA): Thank you, Sir. We, in India, are completing the 60th anniversary of our Independence. Now, the status of women in India is very poor. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I will ask the Members to go out if you interrupt the proceedings. यह मजाक की जगह नहीं है।

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI : Sir, we are completing the 60th anniversary of our Independence. We have been ruled for the last six decades with the Constitution which provides equality of rights as fundamental rights. Now, the reality that is prevailing in the country is that there is a major deprivation of the fundamental rights to a major section of women in the country. The participation of women in the decision making bodies and legislative bodies are very meagre. The number of women representatives has come down from 48 to 44 in the present Lok Sabha. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please be brief. This is not an elaborate debate.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI : Though the UPA Government in its Common Minimum Programme has given an assurance for one-third reservation for women in the Legislative bodies, they have not dared to introduce the Women's Reservation Bill.

MR. SPEAKER: Please conclude. This is not a debate.

Now, Shrimati Archana Nayak – not present.

Madam, please conclude now. This is not a debate. Thank you very much.

SHRIMATI P. SATHEEDEVI : Sir, in the last Assembly elections, in many of the States, a very low participation of women was given. Hence, I urge upon the Union Government to introduce the Women's Reservation Bill and let the country know who are against the women in this country. Thank you, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not convert it into a debate, and do not dilute its importance.

Now, Shrimati Bhavani Rajenthiran. [\[R1\]](#)

SHRIMATI M.S.K. BHAVANI RAJENTHIRAN (RAMANATHAPURAM): Hon. Speaker, Sir, firstly, I would seek your permission to speak from this seat.

MR. SPEAKER: Okay; today you are allowed.

SHRIMATI M.S.K. BHAVANI RAJENTHIRAN : Today is the special day for women.

MR. SPEAKER: You can come further.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRIMATI M.S.K. BHAVANI RAJENTHIRAN : Thank you very much. You respect all the women in the country.

MR. SPEAKER: I want you to come forward also; also in your party.

SHRIMATI M.S.K. BHAVANI RAJENTHIRAN : Thank you very much, Sir.

First of all, on behalf of all the women Members, I convey my heartfelt thanks to all the brothers in the august House. Our respected leader, Dr. Kalaignar, throughout had been fighting for the freedom of women, and he had conducted a women's rally to urge upon the Government to bring forward the Women's Reservation Bill.

Three years have already passed. The UPA Government is working for the poor people, specially for upliftment of women. Now, only two years are remaining. Therefore, I would urge upon the Union Government to bring the Women's Reservation Bill because nowadays women are playing the key role in all the fields. So, in order to respect the women, the UPA Government should bring forward the Women's Reservation Bill. Our great leader Thandai Periyar even in 1929 fought for women.

Therefore, in order to respect all the leaders who speak for women, the UPA Government, which is fighting for the freedom of women, should bring the Women's Reservation Bill as early as possible. Thank you.

MR. SPEAKER: Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari -- not present.

श्रीमती रंजीत रंजन (सहरसा) : सबसे पहले मैं अध्यक्ष महोदय का आभार प्रकट करना चाहती हूँ, जिन्होंने महिलाओं को सम्मान देते हुए, महिला सदस्यों को बोलने का अवसर दिया। मैं अपने पुरुष सदस्यों से यह निवेदन करना चाहूंगी कि वे सदन में शांति बनाकर रखें क्योंकि एक ही दिन हम लोगों को बोलने के लिए मिला है।... (व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आप बिलकुल ठीक बोल रही हैं। You Are right.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Sir, please allow one Member from each party. I have also given a notice in this regard. We have also to support this Women's Reservation Bill... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Silence please. We have to go to the Question Hour immediately.

श्रीमती रंजीत रंजन : आज महिलाओं के लिए बहुत महत्वपूर्ण दिन है। मैं कहना चाहूंगी कि इस सदन में यदि महिलाओं को आगे बढ़ने के लिए प्रेरित किया जाता है तो सबसे पहला कदम जो इस सदन का होगा, वह महिला आरक्षण बिल, जो अभी तक नहीं आया है, उसे सदन में लाना।

दूसरी बात मैं यह कहना चाहूंगी जब हमारी महिलाएं खुद सशक्त होकर दो कदम, दो प्रेरणा और दो निश्चय नहीं कर लेती कि एक महिला ही एक महिला का सम्मान करेगी और हम प्रण लेंगे कि न तो हम भ्रूण हत्या करेंगे और न होने देंगे।

तीसरी बात, हम महिलाएं अपनी रक्षा और अपनी आमदनी के लिए पुरुषों पर निर्भर न होकर स्वावलंबी बनकर अपनी रक्षा और अपने आपको आर्थिक रूप से मजबूत करने के लिए काम करेंगी। हमें उन महिलाओं से प्रेरणा लेनी चाहिए जो हमारी प्रेरणादायक हैं, चाहे आप कल्पना चावला और सानिया मिर्जा को ले लीजिए। इसके अलावा बहुत सी प्रेरणादायक महिलाएं हैं जो मीडिया के माध्यम से सामने नहीं आई हैं, वे गांवों में रहकर महिलाओं को प्रेरित करती रहती हैं, मैं उन महिलाओं को सैल्यूट मारती हूँ। इतना कहकर मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करती हूँ। धन्यवाद।

MR. SPEAKER: I join you.

Now, Shrimati Kiran Maheshwari. I called your name earlier, but you were not present. As an exception, I am allowing you.

श्रीमती किरण माहेश्वरी (उदयपुर) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, सर्वप्रथम मैं कहना चाहती हूँ कि आज अंतर्राष्ट्रीय महिला दिवस है और एक महिला सांसद होने के नाते आपने मुझे बोलने के लिए समय प्रदान किया, इसके लिए आभार व्यक्त करती हूँ। मैं सदन का ध्यान इस तरफ आकर्षित करना चाहती हूँ कि यही सदन था जब सदन के द्वारा 74वां अमेंडमेंट हुआ, जिसके कारण पंचायती राज और नगर पालिका में 33 प्रतिशत आरक्षण के तहत महिलाएं चुनकर उन क्षेत्रों में जनप्रतिनिधि बन कर काम कर रही हैं।...(व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: Kiranji, you address the Chair.

श्रीमती किरण माहेश्वरी : मैं इस बात की तरफ सभी मौजूद सांसदों का ध्यान आकर्षित करना चाहती हूँ कि जिस 74वें अमेंडमेंट के तहत महिलाओं को आरक्षण मिला था, उसी के कारण बहुत सी बहनों को सत्ता में भागीदारी का मौका मिला। उन्होंने अपनी कार्यक्षमता के माध्यम से जनता का विश्वास भी जीता और सोसायटी के अंदर अपनी पहचान बनाई, जिसके कारण लोगों को लगने लगा कि अगर महिलाओं को भी सत्ता में भागीदारी दी जाए तो महिलाएं भी सत्ता में अच्छी भूमिका निभा सकती हैं। और स्वच्छ राजनीति हो सकती है और इसी के तहत वे अच्छा काम भी कर सकती हैं। लेकिन मैं इसी बात को और आगे बढ़ाना चाहती हूँ। मैं आज अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय महिला दिवस पर एक अपील करना चाहती हूँ कि 33 प्रतिशत आरक्षण विधानसभाओं और लोक सभा के तहत भी आये, जिसके लिए एक बिल यहां पर प्रस्तुत होना चाहिए। यू. पी.ए. की सरकार को बने तीन साल हो गये, हर बार हम लोग इस बात की उम्मीद करते हैं, हर सत्र के अन्दर उम्मीद करते हैं कि शायद इस सत्र के अन्दर महिला आरक्षण बिल रखा जायेगा, जिस पर सदन के सारे माननीय सदस्य चर्चा करेंगे। लेकिन दुर्भाग्य इस बात का है कि तीन साल हो गये, यू.पी.ए. की चेयरपर्सन एक महिला हैं, सोनिया गांधी जी हैं, कांग्रेस की अध्यक्ष भी महिला सोनिया गांधी जी हैं।...(व्यवधान)

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आपका हो गया। Do not repeat. Do not make it controversial today. I have given you the opportunity.

Now, Shrimati Sujatha.

श्रीमती किरण माहेश्वरी : उसके बावजूद भी एक महिला होकर यह संवेदनशीलता नहीं रही कि महिला आरक्षण बिल इस सदन के अन्दर प्रस्तुत किया जाये।...(व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: You have made your point.

श्रीमती किरण माहेश्वरी : जिस पर अच्छे तरीके से चर्चा की जाये और इसलिए मैं आपके माध्यम से सदन से यही निवेदन करना चाहूंगी कि यह महिला आरक्षण बिल, जो महिलाओं को सशक्ति देगा और महिलाओं की एक भागीदारी बनाएगा।...(व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing more will be recorded. Only the speech of Shrimati Sujatha will go on record.

*(Interruptions) ...**

MR. SPEAKER: Shrimati Sujatha, you start your speech.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Do not misuse. I gave you an opportunity. Do not repeat. मैंने पूरा मौका दिया है। आपको सुमित्रा जी से सीखना चाहिए कि कैसे बोलना चाहिए। She is also a woman. It is very unfair.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: It is very unfair. आपको मौका दिया है, सब को दिया है। I am very sorry. Nothing is being recorded. Nothing will be recorded.

(Interruptions) ...

MR. SPEAKER: Shrimati Sujatha, you mention it in one minute. It is not an occasion for a debate.

* Not recorded

श्रीमती सी.एस. सुजाता (मवेलीकारा): अध्यक्ष महोदय, यू.पी.ए. सरकार ने वायदा करके भी महिला आरक्षण विधेयक संसद के पिछले सत्र में पेश नहीं किया था। ऐसा करके विश्वासघात किया गया है। अध्यक्ष महोदय, आज अन्तर्राष्ट्रीय महिला दिवस है, हम मांग करते हैं कि सरकार महिला आरक्षण का अपना वायदा पूरा करे और संसद के इसी सत्र में इस विधेयक को पेश किया जाये। धन्यवाद।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : महिलाओं को ज्यादा हिस्सा लेना चाहिए।

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK (KENDRAPARA):c Sir, today we are observing the International Women's Day. No doubt that women in India have very ably showed their presence in various walks of life. Women represent half of the population of our country. Hence the need of the hour is to give them enough representation in the highest political decision making forums like Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I am very, very unhappy today. It is an important occasion. Let it not be lip-service to women's cause.

Yes, you go on please.

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK : In this context, I would like to draw the attention of the House to the need for 33 per cent reservation of seats for women in Parliament. Even after 60 years of Independence, adequate representation of women in Indian Parliament is still a dream. The House may be aware that 10 years ago, the Deve Gowda Government brought a Bill seeking 33 per cent reservation of seats for women in Parliament.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (PALGHAT): Sir, the Government should respond.

MR. SPEAKER: You will serve the cause by keeping quiet.

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK : Later a Joint Parliamentary Committee was formed and a consensus Bill was emerged from there. The Bill was there even during the Gujral Government.

The Vajpayee Government introduced it in the Lok Sabha during 1998 for the second time.

MR. SPEAKER: You please be brief. All right, you want the Bill to be taken up.

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK : After the dissolution of Lok Sabha, it was again introduced in the Lok Sabha in 1999. However, it was painful to note that the Bill is still pending before the House. [\[MSOffice2\]](#)

MR. SPEAKER: Now, I find that I made a mistake.

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK : The present Lok Sabha has only eight per cent representation of women. During 2004-06, the average representation of women in the State Legislative Assemblies is just 6.5 per cent.

MR. SPEAKER: Shrimati Sushila Kerketta.

You may lay it on the Table.

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK : Therefore, it is evident that till a constitutional mandate is emerged in Parliament, the democratic right of women will continue to suffer.

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. It is a 3-page statement that you have prepared. Lay it on the Table please.

SHRIMATI ARCHANA NAYAK : Therefore, I urge upon the Government to bring a Bill seeking one-third reservation of seats for women in Parliament and in State Legislative Assemblies and get the same passed during the current Session itself.

श्रीमती सुशीला केरकेटा (खूँटी): अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं राष्ट्रीय महिला सशक्तीकरण दिवस के अवसर पर सबसे पहले मैं आपको धन्यवाद देना चाहती हूँ कि आपने हम सभी महिलाओं को धन्यवाद दिया है, कांग्रेस्युलेशन दिया है। इसके साथ ही साथ मैं सभी सदस्यों को उनके द्वारा दी गयी शुभकामनाओं के लिए बहुत-बहुत धन्यवाद देती हूँ। आज महिलाएं किसी भी क्षेत्र में पीछे नहीं हैं। वे सभी क्षेत्रों में बढ़-चढ़कर हिस्सा ले रही हैं, चाहे वह किसी भी क्षेत्र में हो, शिक्षा के क्षेत्र में हो या स्वास्थ्य के क्षेत्र में हो। आज तो महिलाएं रणक्षेत्र में भी चली गयी हैं और हम सबको मिलकर उन्हें, एन्क्रेज करना चाहिए ताकि वे रणक्षेत्र में भी हिस्सा ले सकें। महिला सशक्तीकरण दिवस के अवसर पर यह बड़ी खुशी की बात है क्योंकि चाहे वे सरकारी योजनाएं हों, सभी में महिलाओं के लिए सरकार की ओर से कुछ न कुछ दिया गया है, लेकिन बड़े खेद के साथ कहना पड़ता है कि कोई भी विवाद, ईमानदारी से महिलाओं के लिए ये जो सभी सुविधाएं लागू की गयी हैं, उन्हें लागू नहीं करता है। इसके लिए हमें जांच करनी चाहिए।

दूसरी बात, मैं झारखंड की महिलाओं के संबंध में कहना चाहती हूँ। आज झारखंड की महिलाएं जो पढ़ी लिखी हैं या जो नहीं पढ़ी लिखी हैं, आज सभी रोजगार की खोज में शहरों में जा रही हैं चाहे वह कलकत्ता हो, दिल्ली हो या मुंबई हो। उनकी स्थिति बड़ी ही दयनीय है। मैं अनुरोध करना चाहूंगी कि उनके लिए कोई खास कार्यक्रम दिल्ली या भिन्न-भिन्न शहरों में चलाया जाए, जिससे कि वे अपने लिए काम पा सकें और अपनी जीविका चला सकें।

मैं महिला आरक्षण बिल के बारे में कुछ कहना चाहूंगी। स्वर्गीय राजीव गांधी जी ने हमें आरक्षण दिया और आज हम पंचायतों में प्रतिनिधित्व कर रही हैं और हम करके भी दिखा रही हैं कि महिला कितना अच्छा काम कर सकती हैं। लेकिन आज तक हमें राजनीति में आरक्षण नहीं मिल पाया है। विधान सभा और लोकसभा में हमें आरक्षण नहीं मिल रहा है। हर रोज मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि यही भाई हैं, यही हमारे प्रतिनिधि हैं, जो बिल पास करने वाले हैं। मुझे ऐसा लगता है कि हमें ये बच्चे की तरह समझते हैं।

अध्यक्ष महोदय : आपने बहुत अच्छे तरीके से अपनी बात कही है।

श्रीमती सुशीला केरकेटा : महोदय, जैसे बच्चों को झुनझुना दिखाया जाता है और झुनझुना दिखाकर फिर रख लिया जाता है, ठीक यही परिस्थिति आज हमारी है। ये हमें झुनझुना दिखाते हैं कि आरक्षण बिल हम पास करेंगे, लेकिन यह हो नहीं रहा है। इसके पीछे क्या कारण हैं? जरूर कुछ कठिनाइयां हैं, विचार-विमर्श में हमारा मत नहीं मिल रहा है, तो हमें आपस में विचार विमर्श करके जो भी खामियां हैं, उसको दूर करिए। महिलाओं का आरक्षण बिल यथाशीघ्र पास किया जाए। आज हम इसी को अपना सबसे बड़ा उपहार समझेंगे।

MR. SPEAKER: I compliment you especially for your maiden intervention. Very well done.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI (PILIBHIT): Sir, according to the Inter- Parliamentary Union, India stands 108th in its representation of women in the Legislature. Pakistan, which is a Muslim country, stands 48th. I also know, however much we may ask, that the Women's Reservation Bill is not going to come. Can we start with by each Party giving one-third reservation to women starting from the State elections that are coming up now?

MR. SPEAKER: It is a good suggestion.

SHRIMATI JHANSI LAKSHMI BOTCHA (BOBBILI) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, today is 8th March, 2007 and I would like to raise a matter of urgent public importance on the occasion of the International Women's Day. I regret to say that even in the 60th year of our Independence, the plight of women has not changed much. Perhaps, the visible improvement in the social environment is restricted to educated and economic minority group of women.[\[s3\]](#)

Even though the Government is making sincere efforts, in general, to improve the image of the girl child and women through social and economic interventions, but female feticides are rampant. It is a cause of concern for the decline in sex ratio. The domestic violence; harassment for dowry; and sexual harassment are also on the rise.

Proper education of girls can only be possible when all social stigmas -- which go against the women -- are rooted out of the society. Social stigmas such as gender bias; considering the girls as anta-property; and weaker than men are very dangerous. As a matter of fact, the genesis of human existence lies in women. So, women should be given due regard in the society.

The excellence achieved by women like Indrani Nooyi, Deepa Mehta, Meera Nair, Sunita Williams and Sania Mirza -- in the limited opportunities that are provided to them -- vindicates that women can do much better if equal opportunities are provided to them.

In order to alleviate the sufferings of women all over the country, I would humbly request our Government on the International Women's Day to bring forward the Women's Reservation Bill in this Session itself with consensus on it among all political parties. I hope and trust that 33 per cent strength of this august House would be represented by women in the 15th Lok Sabha.

Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

MR. SPEAKER: All male Members join the Chair.

... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI): Sir, on behalf of the Government ...
(*Interruptions*)

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Sir, please allow men also to express their views. Each Party would like to raise the issue, and express their views. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Yerrannaidu, your name is already associated.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : What is his name associated with? ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, on behalf of the Government ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Just a minute. The Government is giving a response.

... (*Interruptions*)

DR. K.S. MANOJ (ALLEPPEY): Sir, please allow us to speak. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: I have already said that all male Members are associated.

... (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): Sir, I have four daughters, two granddaughters and one wife. I should be allowed to speak. ...
(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Please do not go on multiplying!

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, on behalf of the UPA Government, we sincerely and respectfully submit to you that we share the concern expressed by all the distinguished lady Members cutting across Party lines, and we all share together your own views on this issue. It is a fact that the UPA Government in its Common Minimum Programme pertaining to the Women's Reservation Bill made it abundantly clear that it be brought in the House.

I am very proud today to say that I represent a Party, and I represent a Government in which some of the dreams of late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi is yet to be achieved, which was first translated in the local self-Government through the 74th Amendment. This was the first day when every section of women in the village, and the municipality got their rights.

Sir, the journey is not over. We have to accomplish the journey fully. But I am sorry to say that unfortunately the name of the Chairperson of the UPA was mentioned, and asked : "What she is doing in this matter?". I can only say that she is piloting the issue right from the days of NDA, and she is very determined to see that we find the light of the day. There is a requirement of Constitutional amendment, and 2/3rd

majority is required in both Houses to pass it. Therefore, our Government has interacted with several Parties. The Home Minister himself has talked on behalf of the Government, and we are finding some ways. Hopefully, the light is coming very very close, and we may bring it. ... (*Interruptions*)

I would like to say that Shrimati Kiran took the name of Shrimati Sonia. You should know that in spite of the fact that my late Prime Minister was a victim and was killed by assassins -- a few of them women -- yet Shrimati Sonia Gandhi did not insist for hanging Nalini when she gathered that Nalini has her children, and they will search for their mother afterwards. This is the kind of leadership that we have in the UPA. Therefore, I submit once again that the UPA Government is determined to bring the Bill before our tenure is over, and we shall approach very fast. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (BANKURA): No, it should not be done before your tenure is over, but you should bring it in this Session itself. ... (*Interruptions*)

11.30 hrs

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we will take up the Question Hour. Q. No. 141.

डॉ. सत्यनारायण जटिया : अध्यक्ष महोदय, विमानपत्तनों के आधुनिकीकरण करने के बारे में प्रश्न पूछा गया है। मंत्री जी ने अपने उत्तर में बताया है कि आधुनिकीकरण का कुछ काम किया गया है। मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या काम किया गया है और आधुनिकीकरण में कौन-कौन से ऐसे काम हैं जिन्हें किया जाना है? निश्चित रूप से इंदौर और भोपाल जो मध्य प्रदेश में हैं, उनका आधुनिकीकरण करने की दृष्टि से सरकार ने कुछ काम किया है। किन्तु उस लक्ष्य को कब तक पूरा किया जाएगा? साथ ही जबलपुर और ग्वालियर के ऐसे दो हवाई अड्डे मध्य प्रदेश में हैं। उज्जैन का हवाई अड्डा भी महत्वपूर्ण है जिसका विकास किया जाना है। इस बारे में सरकार का क्या विचार है?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Sir, the hon. Member has asked about upgradation of airports, especially in Madhya Pradesh. Naturally, he has the interest of his State in mind. The Indore Airport is, of course, the busiest Airport in Madhya Pradesh. Unfortunately, we have not been able to upgrade it for various reasons in

the past. Your esteemed colleague, Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan, is sitting behind you and she will be agreeing with you on this. She is a witness to all the expansion programmes which are going on in Indore. Of course, it is not fully up to the mark as you would like it because there are various constraints. However, that being the case, things are much better; Indore Airport will be upgraded even further. A new Cargo Complex, terminal expansion, all these facilities are being taken up. Both Indore and Bhopal Airports of Madhya Pradesh, out of the total 35 that are coming up in the country, have been taken up under the 35 Non-Metro Upgradation Programme.

Bhopal has some serious limitations due to land availability. There is some Defence land which is to be acquired. I have spoken to the successive Chief Ministers of Madhya Pradesh in the last two-and-a-half years. Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to resolve the land issues. However, I can assure the hon. Member that Bhopal and Indore Airports, the two premier Airports of Madhya Pradesh, have been taken up for upgradation under the 35 Non-Metro Upgradation Programme, and they will get the attention they deserve.

In case of Jabalpur, the commercial services have been started only a year ago, and so is the case with Gwalior. We intend to increase the connectivity to Madhya Pradesh much more in the future.

MR. SPEAKER: After such a very elaborate answer, do you have any more questions to ask? Please put your second supplementary.

डॉ. सत्यनारायण जटिया : अध्यक्ष महोदय, जैसे मैंने कहा है कि हवाई यात्राओं की दृष्टि से काफी दबाव बढ़ता जा रहा है। आप जानते हैं कि उज्जैन का महत्व इसलिए भी है क्योंकि उसके साथ देवास का पूरा इंडस्ट्रियल स्टेट लगा हुआ है। इसलिए उज्जैन के बारे में विचार करने के लिए मैं आपसे आग्रह कर रहा हूँ। साथ ही खजुराहो का महत्व भी आप जानते हैं। वह भी एक महत्वपूर्ण स्टेशन है जिसका विकास किया जाना चाहिए। आपने अभी आश्वस्त किया है कि हम इंदौर और भोपाल हवाई अड्डों के आधुनिकीकरण का कार्य करने वाले हैं। आपने जबलपुर के बारे में भी कहा है। मैं एक और बात पूछना चाहता हूँ कि इन सब कार्यों के लिए क्या आप कोई समयबद्ध कार्य योजना बनाएंगे? साथ ही आप ग्रीन फील्ड के कान्सैप्ट को कैसे पूरा करेंगे?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I forgot to mention Khajuraho in my earlier answer. Khajuraho Airport is also being upgraded in a very big way. There is a new terminal coming up. Khajuraho is also a part of the modernization programme, which is currently going on. Khajuraho had very poor connectivity, and those issues are also being addressed.

Every hon. Member feels that there should be new connectivity or a new airport in his city. As far as Ujjain is concerned, since it is your State Government, you should impress upon the Chief Minister and the State Government to come forward and have some kind of a joint programme where some cost also can be shared by the State. Ultimately, it will help in the development of Ujjain from the point of tourism and the State also can develop industrially as well.

MR. SPEAKER: There are other States than Madhya Pradesh.

Shri Ganesh Singh – not present.

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY : We all know that Visakhapatnam is an important city.

MR. SPEAKER: I allowed a debate on this. I know that every hon. Member will ask for special facilities in his city or State, but then how many States will have?

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY : For the development of Visakhapatnam Airport, thanks to the Civil Aviation Ministry, they gave sufficient funds. However, the present situation is that the Airport is being closed often for proper maintenance and repair.^[r4] The hon. Minister and the State Government joined hands and have done the improvement work. They have spent nearly Rs.240 crore for its development.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question.

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY : May I know from the Minister as to when he is coming to inaugurate and make the runway functional?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Hon. Reddyji is fully aware that we went, at his instance, for the *Bhoomi Pujan*. Very rarely it happens in Governments when Ministers do *Bhoomi Pujan* and also the inauguration. We have done the *Bhoomi Pujan* and hopefully, if the Lok Sabha continues for its full term, we will do the inauguration also.

SHRI N. JANARDHANA REDDY : I asked about the runway.

MD. SALIM : He is saying 'runway', not 'run away'.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Hon. Reddyji is fully aware, as the former Chief Minister of that State and also as the representative of that area, that it is a Naval Airbase. We, in conjunction with the Navy, State Government and Airports Authority, have spent almost Rs.150 crore jointly. The Rs.150 crore runway is now ready and it is going to be commissioned in a very few months I would say. The hon. Member himself is a witness to what is happening there. So, I really do not see any reason for him to be apprehensive about the development of Visakhapatnam airport.

MR. SPEAKER: You cannot satisfy everybody. Therefore, you just briefly reply, if I may say so.

SHRIMATI MINATI SEN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, for years the Government of West Bengal is demanding upgradation of Bagdogra to an international airport but no fruitful action has yet been taken by the Union Government. Recently, the Chief Minister of West Bengal has sent a request to the Central Government in this regard. I would like to know from the Government as to when the longstanding demand will be met.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I fully appreciate the concern of the hon. Member because Bagdogra not only links the North-East, it also in a way connects Sikkim, Bhutan, Nepal and also Bihar. From that point of view what the hon. Member is saying is right. At the same time, you must appreciate that Bagdogra is not an Airports Authority field. It is defence field where we run a civilian conclave. I share the hon. Member's concerns and we will try to see if we can find some way where Bagdogra's development can be taken up according to her wish. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, please cooperate. I have got 31 names. It will take two days to complete the Question Hour if we go like this.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: It is a very important subject, Sir.

MR. SPEAKER: Everything is important in this place.

श्री रेवती रमन सिंह : माननीय अध्यक्ष जी, मैं आपको धन्यवाद देते हुए माननीय मंत्री जी से कहना चाहता हूँ कि आपने जो लिस्ट दी है, उसमें इलाहाबाद में आधुनिकीकरण में सीएटीसी का काम पूरा हो गया है। मैं मंत्री जी से कई बार आग्रह कर चुका हूँ कि इलाहाबाद के एयरपोर्ट को अपग्रेड करें और कम से कम वहां से प्लेन्स चलवाने का काम करें। महोदय, आप जानते हैं कि इलाहाबाद में कुम्भ मेला लगा था जिसमें 5.50 करोड़ लोग आए और लगभग 70,000 विदेशी लोग वहां आए थे। माननीय मंत्री जी ने वायदा किया था कि इसे पूरा करेंगे। मैं जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या आप वहां पर विमान सेवा शुरू करेंगे।

MR. SPEAKER: I think you just mention the city or place and the Minister will answer. All this prefacing is not necessary.

SHRI REWATI RAMAN SINGH : He is fully aware of it, Sir.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: This morning, before Question Hour also I have had a chat with the hon. Member. I can assure that there is no other issue about the airport at Allahabad. The airport there is functional. It is about more flights now going into Allahabad. In a free market situation, airlines are free to go to any city depending on their business plans. Based on that, I will, on the hon. Member's behalf, try to speak to all the airlines and encourage them to go to Allahabad.[\[KMR5\]](#)

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know, through you, Sir, from the hon. Minister as to when the modernisation of Biju Patnaik airport is going to be completed and announced as an international airport. Is there any proposal with the Government to set up or upgrade any other airport, including Sambalpur, in Orissa in view of the number of steel plants coming up in the State.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: There is no question about the importance of Biju Patnaik in Bhubaneswar airport. It is very much part of the 35 airports modernisation plan. It is amongst the priority areas because we do realise that it is the only operational airport in the entire State of Orissa. So, the work and the upgradation will be completed in a time-bound manner by the end of 2008 as the hon. Member would like it to be. It would be done in a way so that it is upgraded to international standards. That is the entire plan for all the 35 non-metro airports.

He wants to know about another airport – Jharsiguda, which is an airfield about which I have been trying to speak to the State Government and certain other stakeholders to see if that airfield will now be made operation. I will be happy to see some result is achieved in the near future.

MR. SPEAKER: Brevity have to be both in question and answer.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Raising hands between question and answer has no effect on me. Do not raise your hands unnecessarily. Your names are being recorded and they are being sent to me.

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR : Hon. Speaker, Sir, what I would like to know from the hon. Minister is this. As per schedule, Calicut airport would have been completed last year itself but I do not know why it has been delayed. Due to non-completion of work at Calicut airport, international and domestic flights are operating from the domestic terminals. There are only two conveyor belts and the construction of aerobridge is going on causing delay, congestion and inconvenience. Though Calicut airport has been declared as an

international airport, foreign flights are still not permitted to operate from there. I would like to know as to why it is so. Would the Ministry take steps to expedite the modernization work in Calicut airport and make it a full-fledged international airport? I want an assurance from the hon. Minister in this regard.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I would like to assure the hon. Member that the work in Calicut airport would be completed in this current year, 2007 itself. He would have no reason to raise this matter again as all these works would be completed before the end of 2007.

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मंत्री जी ने अपने उत्तर में बताया है कि पटना के जय प्रकाश नारायण एयरपोर्ट का कुछ आधुनिकीकरण किया गया है। आपको जानकारी होगी कि कुछ र्वा पूर्व वहां दुर्घटना हुई थी, जिसमें बड़े पैमाने पर लोग मारे गए थे। जय प्रकाश नारायण एयरपोर्ट का रनवे बहुत छोटा है, जिससे एयरबस को लैंड करने में दिक्कत आती है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय: आप प्रश्न पूछें।

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : मैं प्रश्न ही पूछ रहा हूं। वहां का रनवे छोटा होने के कारण एयरबस नहीं उतर पाती है। इस वजह से अब भी दुर्घटना की सम्भावनाएं बनी हुई हैं। मैं मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूं कि उस रनवे को बड़ा करने के लिए या अन्य कोई वैकल्पिक व्यवस्था करने के लिए राज्य सरकार के साथ बात करके कोई उपाय सोचा है, जिससे वहां एयरबस स्मूथली उतर सके? इसके अलावा भागलपुर में हाल ही में मंत्री जी ने अधिकारियों को भेजा था।

MR. SPEAKER: Do not go on giving information.

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : उसी से जुड़ा हुआ प्रश्न है।

अध्यक्ष महोदय: उससे जुड़ा हुआ नहीं है।

श्री राम कृपाल यादव : भागलपुर के एयरपोर्ट का विस्तार करने की आपकी क्या योजना है?

श्री प्रफुल पटेल:पटना हवाईअड्डे के बारे में आप जानते हैं कि वहां जमीन का मसला है। Land has not been made available for the expansion of the runway. On the other side, there is a botanical garden. So, trees are not being able to be pruned so that the runway length available is fully utilised. But nonetheless, we are making efforts. I am continuously in contact with the State Government. I have requested the previous and the present Chief Ministers that please if something can be done, we would be more than happy because Patna is again a Capital and also a very important city.

As far as Bhagalpur is concerned – he is my predecessor – I can assure him that we have sent a team to Bhagalpur to have a relook at it and very soon, I will hope to give some positive reply in the House. [16]

MR. SPEAKER: Good. Thank you. Towards the end of this Budget Session, I will allow it again because he is the most popular Minister now!

SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY : With the modernization of the airports, at least there are some changes in the airports, after the UPA Government came to power. Even then, the airport is overcrowded. While we travel in the morning, we have to stand in long queue. But the statement of the hon. Minister is encouraging. I would like to know from the hon. Minister, what is the time limit for inauguration and completion of all these projects and particularly, Kolkata and Chennai? He has taken Kolkata and Chennai under a special scheme.

Under what scheme, he is going to take up those projects and when will they be completed? There is a long delay; from 2001, they are pending.

MR. SPEAKER: Thank you, for showing some concern for Kolkata also.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Let me first speak about Kolkata Airport. Airports Authority has taken a decision to take up modernization of Kolkata Airport on a priority basis. It will be done by the Airports Authority; the work will begin in the next few months. We shall all be hopefully there, when I will request your goodself also, Sir, to be present there.

As far as the Chennai Airport is concerned I have had a round of discussion with the State Government and other senior leaders also. There are some land issues which are yet to be resolved. These issues are there with every airport, like further availability of land. The Airports Authority is in talks with the Governments for availability of land. Once something is resolved, I will certainly be able to speak on that.

MR. SPEAKER: We have taken too much time on this. But I will allow Shri Tapir Gao because he is from the North East. 'North East' is my weakness.

SHRI TAPIR GAO : First of all, I congratulate the hon. Minister on behalf of the people of North East. We are proud of our Civil Aviation Minister for undertaking modernization of airports.

MR. SPEAKER: What do you want from him?

SHRI TAPIR GAO : Modernization of airport is taking place speedily in Dibrugarh. But in Dibrugarh, there is a long pending dispute or issue with the Defence. I would like to know from the hon. Minister, when he is going to take up that issue and resolve it with the Defence, for expansion of Dibrugarh Airport?

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: Work is going on in Dibrugarh Airport. Some more area is required. Hon. Defence Minister is also sitting here; I am sure, he has heard your sentiments; I will take up the matter with the Minister on your behalf and on behalf of the Airports Authority.

MR. SPEAKER: Last supplementary – Shri Yerrannaidu. Please put your question very briefly, without any preface.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : I will take only one minute.

MR. SPEAKER: One minute is a long time. Please put your question in brief.

SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU : Andhra Pradesh is the fifth largest State in the country. The Airports Authority has decided and proposed to take up modernization of Rajamundry, Vijayawada and Cuddappah Airports. May I know whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has entered into any MoU with the Airports Authority? What are the terms of references or the conditions mentioned in the agreement? Is State Government's participation is there or Airports Authority alone can take up modernization of these airports? I would like to know these from the hon. Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: It is a long question; you can give an answer later.

SHRI PRAFUL PATEL: I will give him a detailed reply. But I can assure that Rajamundry and Vijayawada are definitely being upgraded on a time bound manner. Especially because of offshore oil exploration, Rajamundry has become a very important aviation centre.

(Q. No. 142)

[17]श्री जसवंत सिंह बिश्नोई : अध्यक्ष जी, पिछले कुछ समय से पश्चिमी राजस्थान के बाड़मेर और जैसलमेर में तेल बहुत बड़ी मात्रा में मिला है। भारत सरकार ने आश्वासन दिया था कि वहां पर रिफाइनरी खोली जाएगी, लेकिन वह रिफाइनरी वहां न लगाकर पंजाब में ट्रांसफर कर दी गयी। बाद में ओएनजीसी को कहा गया कि वह सर्वे करके वहां पर रिफाइनरी खोले। अध्यक्ष जी, राजस्थान में जहां भारी मात्रा में क्रूड ऑयल मिला है और रिफाइनरी के लिए जो रियायतें भारत सरकार ने चाही थीं वे रियायतें राजस्थान सरकार दे चुकी है। राजस्थान की मुख्यमंत्री माननीया वसुंधरा राजे सिंधिया जी ने माननीय मंत्री जी को इस बारे में चिट्ठी लिखी, राजस्थान के पेट्रोलियम मंत्री श्री लक्ष्मी नारायण दवे साहब ने भी चिट्ठियां लिखी हैं कि जो रियायतें रिफाइनरी के लिए आवश्यक हैं वे सभी हम देने के लिए तैयार हैं। हम माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहते हैं कि उस रिफाइनरी को लगाने के लिए भारत सरकार क्या विचार कर रही है? माननीय मंत्री जी हमारे राजस्थान से संबंध रखते हैं और हम उनसे आशा रखते हैं कि इस सदन में राजस्थान के बाड़मेर में रिफाइनरी लगाने की वे घोणा करेंगे।[18]

MR. SPEAKER: He is a Minister for India as a whole.

श्री श्रीचन्द कृपलानी : माननीय मंत्री जी, राजस्थान का आपको ख्याल रखना चाहिए। ... (व्यवधान)

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

(Interruptions) ... *

श्री मुरली देवरा : राजस्थान में रिफाइनरी लगाने का काम ओएनजीसी के विचाराधीन है। आप भरोसा रखिये, कुछ समय बाद इसका इकोनॉमिक सर्वे कराया जा रहा है। स्टेट बैंक ऑफ इंडिया का एसबीआई कैप इसका इकोनॉमिक सर्वे करके बताएगा और तभी इसका सही निर्णय आपके सामने होगा। भारत सरकार आपके यहां रिफाइनरी लगाने की पूरी कोशिश कर रही है।

श्री जसवंत सिंह बिश्नोई : अध्यक्ष जी, जैसा कि माननीय मंत्री जी ने बताया कि हम इसका इकोनॉमिक सर्वे करा रहे हैं। इस समय पानीपत और मथुरा में रिफाइनरी हैं और भटिंडा में रिफाइनरी खोलने की घोणा की गयी है। क्या जो रिफाइनरियां खोली गयी हैं क्या उन सभी का इकोनॉमिक सर्वे हुआ है या वे एक राजनीतिक आधार पर खोली गयी हैं। मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि भटिंडा की रिफाइनरी वहां लगाई जा रही है, जहां पंजाब में एक लीटर तेल भी पैदा नहीं होता। वहां तो कोई सर्वे नहीं हुआ, तो

* Not recorded

राजस्थान के लिए ही इकोनॉमिक सर्वे क्यों हो रहा है? राजस्थान सरकार ने सारी रियायतें देने की घोणा की है, क्या किसी भी प्रदेश की सरकार ने इस तरह की रियायतें देने की घोणा की है? मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से चाहता हू कि वे आज ही राजस्थान में रिफाइनरी खोलने की घोणा करें।

श्री मुरली देवरा: महोदय, भटिंडा की रिफाइनरी का ऐलान किये हुए 6-7 वर्षों से ज्यादा हो गये हैं। मैं फिर कहना चाहूंगा कि राजस्थान की रिफाइनरी का सबसे बड़ा कारण यह रहा है कि के एंड एन कंपनी द्वारा जोधपुर के पास में नया ऑयल फील्ड वहां निकला है और वहां 5-6 मिलियन के करीब ऑयल नया निकलेगा। इसके लिए हम कोशिश कर रहे हैं कि ऑयल को वहां पर ही रिफाइन किया जाए।

SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI : ONGC had signed an MoU with the Government of Andhra Pradesh on 21st June 2005 with regard to promotion of petroleum refinery with a capacity of 7.5 million MT per annum at Kakinada Port. Accordingly, as per the direction of Government of Andhra Pradesh, district administration acquired more than 4000 acres of land. Some time back it appeared in Media that ONGC has withdrawn from the setting up of the refinery at Kakinada on the ground of non-viability of the project. However, recently it appeared in Media that the Prime Minister has directed the ONGC through the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas to take up the refinery at Kakinada for increasing the capacity of 7.5 MMT to 15 MMT to make it economically viable. I would like to know from the Minister whether the Government is going to set up the refinery in Kakinada Port or not. The Government has already entered into an MoU with the State Government and as per that MoU the State Government has already acquired the land. Has the Government any time-bound proposal to set up the refinery at Kakinada Port?

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, the hon. Member is very correct. The ONGC has been directed now to reconsider this proposal and come out with a new set of proposal so that a new refinery is set up at Kakinada.

SHRI ABU AYES MONDAL : Speaker, Sir, at present the refineries of our country are implementing quality upgradation projects to supply Euro-III equivalent fuels in metros and identified cities in our country. I would like to know from the Minister the refining capacity as on date of all our refineries and the measures taken to increase the capacity according to the needs.[\[R9\]](#)

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, we have 19 refineries in India – 17 in public sector and two in private sector which are Reliance and ESSAR. The total capacity is 132.47 million metric tonnes and we have a surplus of about 17 to 18 million metric tonnes on that.

SHRIMATI M.S.K. BHAVANI RAJENTHIRAN : Sir, in my poor and very backward Ramanatham District, natural gas is available in abundance. So, I would like to know whether there is any proposal with the Central Government to set up refineries in my area.

I would like to happily place on record in this august House that our revered Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. Kalaignar Karunanidhi has started a project in my area with Rs.400 crore which would help produce electricity through natural gas. I urge upon the Central Government that a special package should also be given to my area through the State Government.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, this is a matter for consideration.

(Q. No. 143)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, he has not replied to the questions because I asked for details about the pending projects and what are the reasons for cost escalation. There are projects which were sanctioned 25 years before and still they are pending. There are a large number of project which were included in the Pink Book but are still pending. Only Rs.1 crore or Rs.2 crore or Rs.5 crore are sanctioned whereas the estimate is Rs.250 crore or Rs.300 crore.

MR. SPEAKER: Put your question.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Four years back, the Ministry of Railways published a White Paper on pending projects and it was proposed to complete a large percentage of projects which are very important.

MR. SPEAKER: There is not much time left. We would only hear your question but no answer.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : They are important projects for the development of the area. May I know from the Minister whether the Ministry of Railways have prioritized the projects? In order to complete those projects whether the Government will provide sufficient funds so that the projects which are very important for the development of that area are completed in a time-bound manner. This would also ensure that there is no further cost escalation.

MR. SPEAKER: There is no time for answer. I do not understand this.

SHRI R. VELU: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to answer that there are 275 projects pending with a throw forward of Rs.58,000 crore. If the hon. Member wants the details regarding all the 275 projects, I would furnish him... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: It is not being recorded. Your interruption is not recorded.

*(Interruptions) ... **

* Not recorded

SHRI R. VELU: In April, 2005, we have prioritized the projects which have to be taken up for implementation. The priority number one is of those projects

which have now advanced to 60 per cent of its implementation and require less than Rs.100 crore. The second priority has been accorded to those projects which are viable and are necessary for operational requirement. The third priority has been given to those national projects, those projects in which the State Government has agreed to provide 50 per cent of the outlay and which are of strategic importance for Defence, projects covered under PPP/RVNL.

12.00 hrs.

The fourth category are other projects, which are not covered under these said three categories. That is how we have prioritized. We quite agree that the amount available to these projects are thinly spread and that is because we have, as I mentioned, Rs. 58,000 crore remain as throw forward, out of which Rs. 30,000 crore relate to gauge conversion. For doubling, electrification and metro projects we have no problems in finding the resources. Where the problem comes is with the balance 89 new lines which would require about Rs. 31,000 crore and for that the hon. Minister has written to all the State Governments to kindly come forward and contribute 50 per cent of the project cost so that the Railways could implement these projects.

Sir, three projects in the State of West Bengal are pending for more than 20 years now. For the Howrah – Amta line, the first phase has been completed... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Question Hour is over. Nothing will be recorded.

*(Interruptions) ... **

* Not recorded