

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Second Session
(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)



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CONTENTS

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No. 14, Thursday, December 16, 1999/Agrahayana 25, 1921 (Saka)

SUBJECT	COLUMNS
ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS	
*Starred Questions Nos. 261-264	1-25
WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS :	
Starred Questions Nos. 265-280	25-56
Unstarred Questions Nos. 2585-2713	56-196
PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE	197-201
ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER	201-202
CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE	
Reported loss to State of Karnataka due to withdrawal by Congentrix Promoters from the proposed power plant in Mangalore	203-216
Shri S. Bangarappa	203, 205-206
Shri P. R. Kumaramangalam	203-205, 213-215
Shri R. L. Jalappa	211-212
Shri K. H. Muniyappa	212
Shri C. K. Jaffer Sharief	212-213
RE : KILLING OF A MINISTER IN MADHYA PRADESH	216-228
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BILL	226-227
MATTERS UNDER RULE 377	227-232
(i) Need to provide Extension Centres of LPG agencies in rural areas	
Shri Maheshwar Singh	227-228
(ii) Need to ensure early functioning of the unit of the Indian Fertilizers Corporation Ltd. Gorkahpur, U.P.	
Yogi Aditya Nath	228
(iii) Need to make comprehensive plan to prevent recurrence of flood at Itahar, Ratua, Kharba and Raiganj in West Bengal	
Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi	228-229
(iv) Need to provide financial assistance to solve the problem of drinking water arising out of blast in wells by ONGC in Gujarat particularly in Patan district	
Shri Pravin Rashtrapal	229

* The sign + marked above the name of a Member indicates that the question was actually asked on the floor of the House by that member.

SUBJECT	COLUMNS
(v) Need for early construction of an overbridge at Pedavallapudi railway crossing in Vijayawada Parliamentary Constituency, Andhra Pradesh Prof. Ummareddy Venkateswarlu	229
(vi) Need to sanction special package for the benefit of fishermen of Kosi in Saharsa Parliamentary Constituency, Bihar Shri Dinesh Chandra Yadav	230
(vii) Need to take necessary steps for proper maintenance of circular Railway in Calcutta Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay	230-231
(viii) Need to formulate a Central Plan to solve acute drinking water problem in Solan, Himachal Pradesh Col. (Retd) Dr. Dhani Ram Shandil	231
(ix) Need for early construction of an underbridge at railway gate on Khariphatak road in Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh Shri Shivrāj Singh Chouhan	231-232
(x) Need to provide financial assistance to State Government of Maharashtra to pay salaries of employees of Maharashtra State Road Corporation Shri Dilipkumar Mansukhlal Gandhi	232
(xi) Need to provide irrigation facilities to the farmers residing in places which have been declared 'dark blocks' Prof. S. P. Singh Baghel	232
CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL	233
Motion to consider	233-235
Shri Ram Jethmalani	233
Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal	235-242
Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan	242-247
Shri Rashid Alvi	247-250
Shri V. P. Singh Badnore	250
Shri Prabhunath Singh	251-252
DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193	
Disinvestment Policy of Government	252-288
Shri Indrajit Gupta	253-261
Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi	261-266
Shri Kirit Somalya	266-275
Shri Basu Deb Acharia	275-281
Dr. B. B. Ramaiah	281-285
Dr. V. Saroja	285-288

LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, December 16, 1999/Agrahayana 25, 1921 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock

[Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair]

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Logistics for troops in Siachen

*261. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps have been taken for exploring means to improve logistics for troops in Siachen;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and other measures being adopted for making improvement in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The requirement of logistics support to the troops deployed in Siachen is being continuously reviewed. It is the constant endeavour of the Government to provide requisite logistic support to troops to enable them to perform their assigned tasks effectively.

2. Some of the important measures that have been taken in this regard are listed below:

Armament

- (a) Improved automatic grenade launcher (lighter version) with upgraded ammunition.
- (b) Night sight for weapons
- (c) Light weight binoculars
- (d) Additional sniper rifle with night sight
- (e) Availability of upgraded ammunition for 155 mm gun
- (f) Disposable RLs (Rocket Launcher)
- (g) State of art Sub Machine Carbine for special Forces.

Communication

- (a) Deployment of modified communication grid. Improved exchanges, radio sets and state of art radio sets.
- (b) VSAT for reliable communication.
- (c) High altitude cable for improved line communication
- (d) Solar panel battery charging.

Clothing

Requirement of special clothing has been fully met. The prevailing practice in the MoD is to constantly review and upgrade clothing in keeping with the availability of better and more comfortable equipment.

Medical

- (a) Issue of high calorific special ration
- (b) Installation of bio-digester for disposal of human waste
- (c) Emergency casualty evacuation equipment
- (d) Greater availability of hyperbaric chamber required for treatment of high altitude pulmonary odema cases (HAPO)
- (e) Central Heating System.

Habitat

- (a) Provision of fibre reinforced plastic hut
- (b) Installation of generator set wherever feasible.

Movement of material

- (a) Laying of pipeline for fuel oil. It is planned to lay 290 kms of pipeline of which 74 kms has already been completed
- (b) Trolleys to carry load over ice-walls.

Movement of Troops

Chartering of civil aircraft for conveyancing of troops proceeding on leave.

Welfare

- (a) Provision of recreation facilities i.e. cable TV etc.
- (b) Availability of INMARSAT based PCO to enable troops to communicate with their families (For this facility, the Department of Telecommunication has reduced tariff to 25% upto 31st March 2000).
- (c) Washing and Dry cleaning Plant
- (d) All Weather Monitoring Station-3.

3. In addition to the above, some items of weapon/ equipment have been contracted and are in the process of being inducted as soon as the equipment arrives in India. These include Anti Material Rifle, Hand Held Thermal Imager, Hand Held IOE, Battlefield Surveillance Radar (MR), Battlefield Surveillance Radar (SR), all of which will be delivered in periods commencing from December, 1999. 327.5 Km roads are also being surfaced at different places in this sector.

[Translation]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Minister of Defence has given a very exhaustive reply for which I am grateful to him. Regarding chemical toilet, he has not mentioned much in his statement. I would like to remind the Defence Minister that it came to light on 3rd May, 1998 when a shepherd in the Kargil sector had informed that Pakistani forces had entered our area and had captured our bunkers. During winter season these bunkers are vacated and as soon as winter comes to an end, our soldiers go back to them. I want to remind the hon'ble Defence Minister about "Operation Meghdoot" conducted in Siachin in 1984. An important event took place in 1987. The present ruler of Pakistan General Musharaff had taken over the command of the Brigade in Siachin Sector. At that time, in his statement he had mentioned that they would capture the saltro reach. He stated this at the time of 'Jehad'. Thereafter he went back and was promoted as General. He had the intention to attack India from one of the three sides which were open to enter India from Pakistan. For this purpose he chose Kargil sector. Our troops were not deployed on the line of control. After the war in India ... (Interruptions)

SHRI TARACHAND SAHU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, a Cabinet Minister of Madhya Pradesh has been murdered ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: This matter may be raised after Question hour.

SHRI TARACHAND SAHU: Mr. Speaker, Sir, Question hour should be suspended... (Interruptions)

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: He is asking his own Government about the situation prevailing there ... (Interruptions) It is good ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SHRICHAND KRIPLANI: Your Government is in power in Madhya Pradesh ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: You have no faith in your Government. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

[English]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: They are disturbing me. I am not responsible for that. They do not have faith in their Government. The disturbance is not from my side. It is a very important question.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question to the hon. Minister.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: It is a very important issue. I would like to tell the hon'ble Defence Minister that after the Kargil war came to an end, elections started in our country. We kept on asking inside and outside the House as to who was responsible for this—Intelligence agencies or the Government. Government did not take cognizance of the situation even after getting intelligence reports. A shepherd noticed the intrusion by Pakistani side.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask your supplementary.

[Translation]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the issue was not discussed, the country did not know that Intelligence Agency. . .

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Shinde, you are a senior member, please understand.

[English]

There are 20 questions in the list.

[Translation]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Our country had to bear heavy losses, it is our duty to seek reply from those who could not safeguard the borders of the country.

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask your question.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: I want to submit that when operation "Meghdoot" was held in Siachin in 1984, our team of military intelligence was deputed to go there and they came to know that some orders were being placed for getting army dresses from abroad. At that time, we could make out that an aggression could take place from there. I want to ask this question of logistics and that is why I am telling this background. I want to ask the Defence Minister that the four officers deputed by you ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MAJ. GEN. (RETD) B.C. KHANDURI: Sir, the question pertains to Siachen and not to Kargil.

[Translation]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Siachen experience snowfall the year round and 22 thousand feet.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Shindeji, you please ask the question. How much time will you take?

[English]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Minister had visited that area and he has also sent four officers to see the tragedy of these soldiers.

[Translation]

Government had sent four officers there, what is their report? The Government should tell the nation the quantum of logistics it has increased.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Member has asked a limited question whereas the Siachen issue is a big issue. When I visited Siachen for the first time and myself experienced the conditions prevailing there I realised that requirements of our Jawans and officers posted there were not being met, they were not getting what was required for them. On seeing all this myself I thought that all of our officers should be posted at the places where our army is deployed. This should not be confined only to Siachen but it is also applicable to the hilly areas of Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, Kutch, North Eastern parts of the country and Andaman and Nicobar Islands where our Army is taking on the rebels. In the order which I issued, it was made clear that the officers should be posted at these place twice during their tenure because it was very difficult to understand the conditions in which our Jawans were working. These instructions regarding posting are in force since then. Officers frequently visit those places, understand their problems and take measures to solve them. At that time it was said that the government has made this provision to punish the officers. It is not correct. In that order I had said that the officers should go to those places as only then they will be able to understand their problems. They should visit those places twice during their tenure. Decisions are taken on the basis of reports of their visits. Therefore, in the written statement I have given the measures implemented during the last one and half year.

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thanked the Minister of Defence when he deputed four officers there. Being the Member of the Parliament I had gone there and I would like to thank you today also for opening new cover in Kargil Sector from where entire terrain of Jammu and Kashmir is visible. But the new cover, which has been opened since August, has not been completed due to administrative difficulties. I suggest that you should ask your Ministry to take early action in this regard.

In written answer regarding movement of material he has said

[English]

(a) laying of pipeline for fuel oil. It is planned to lay 290 kms. of pipeline of which 74 kms has already been completed.

[Translation]

But may I know the time by which the work of laying remaining pipe line will be completed because it is severe cold at such high altitudes and temperature there goes below minus 50° celsius during winter. It is impossible to stay there for more than five minutes on reaching there by helicopter. But I would like to remind that this pipe line is being layed upto J. M. 9842 at the high altitude of 22,000 feet near China pass. I am not asking this from the strategical point of view so that other countries could come to know about it but I want to ask a specific question as to by when the work on kerosene pipe line would be completed? We have read in the newspapers that neighbouring countries are providing Italian made Glacier shoes to their armed forces personnel posted in such areas. During war we were having inadequate supply of such shoes and, as a result, we suffered heavy casualties. Today much casualty is not suffered in war. Even today two soldiers are dying there every day without any war. What is your planning to check such casualties?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there was a time when more armed forces personnel were dying there due to cold weather than due to war. But the situation has now improved a lot. During 1998 the number of people who died due to this reason was only eleven and this year there was a lot of action in that area and a number of assaults took place there. Upto December 14, 1999 twenty one people had died there due to exposure. I am not talking about the people who have been killed in action. Necessary material to beat the cold there has been supplied this year to the soldiers posted there.

Now there is no scarcity of anything right from shoes to hand gloves. The gloves which were being supplied to them one and half years ago were not frostbite resistant but now the situation has changed. As far as work on laying of pipe line is concerned, as you yourself are aware that due to geographical situation of the area laying of pipeline here will definitely be ten times more time consuming. This task will be completed at the earliest and work is going on there with this determination.

MAJ. GEN. (RETD.) B. C. KHANDURI : Hon'ble Speaker Sir, this question is related to logistics in Siachen and during the last one and half year to two years not only logistics has been strengthened there but morale of the personnel deployed there is very high. He is the first minister who had visited that are not once but several time. Therefore, I would like to thank the hon'ble minister and being an ex-serviceman I express my gratitude to him. I is not only the question of

logistics there but the morale of the security personnel deployed there is very high and there is good improvement in logistics there from the last one and half years to two years though it needs further improvement. The hon'ble minister had given a very good reply in this regard.

Mr. Speaker Sir, my pointed question is that about welfare in part 'B' you have said that telephone facility has been provided to the Jawans from there and they are being charged only twenty five percent of the actual charge. The hon'ble Minister is aware that this telephonic conversation takes place through satellite and that is why it is expensive. If the department of telecommunications is not ready to make such calls free as such whether the ministry of Defence will make arrangement to allow them to make free calls for a certain duration say two to three minutes once in a month or to persuade the Department of Telecommunications to make such calls free or to make provision that the twenty five percent being charged from them be borne by the Ministry of Defence. Will the hon'ble Minister make efforts in this regard?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : We will definitely consider it.

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV : Mr. Speaker Sir, through you I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister that the Jawans posted at Siachen or in other parts of the country are providing security cover to us and are protecting our borders. But when a Jawan proceeds on leave to his native place and we enquire about the facilities available to them whether it is canteen food, cloth or other facilities provided by the Ministry of Defence. It is most unfortunate that the Jawans who are protecting our country are not getting food in canteens and other facilities properly. I would like to ask the hon'ble Minister whether our Jawans will get facilities properly in future or not be it the food facility in canteens or other facilities and what action you propose to take in this regard in future?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Mr. Speaker Sir, there is not such place in our country where our Army is deployed and I have not visited that place. I have visited Siachen ten times. Last I have visited Siachen ten days ago as has been mentioned by the hon'ble member just now. Be it Daulat Begoldi or Track junction adjoining Karakoram pass where Jawans are posted they do not have their meal in canteens. Their meal is cooked in the mess and they have their meal at one place and we also take meal with them at every level. As far as the question of quality of the meal is concerned, I would simply like to say that till now we have taken food with them not separately.

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV : When you go there they prepare quality food but what is the quality of their regular food.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Food is prepared by the Jawans themselves.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri George Fernandes, this time you can invite the hon'ble member also to join with you in the dinner.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : I am prepared to send him there ... (Interruptions) I am prepared to send him wherever he wants to go and have a check personally.

[Translation]

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV : Please pay surprise visits.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it very clear that whatever has been said here carries no weight and if the hon'ble member has received any complaint in this regard or he may receive in future can be sent to me and we will definitely take necessary action to improve the situation. In the meantime I would like to make it clear that your question is devoid of substance.

[English]

SHRI R. L. BHATIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Siachen area is very strategic for us and that is how we are spending so much and defending it for a long time. There have been a number of attacks by the Pakistani forces to capture the Siachen area, but they have been very successfully repulsed by our defence forces. The object of the Kargil war was to cut off our line of communication to Siachen area. Now, the Government has been awakened to place orders for modern materials like surveillance radar and anti-material rifle. Why did the Government not place orders earlier because of the importance of Siachen area which we are defending for so long? I would further like to know from the hon. Minister as to whether there are other areas in that range which are vulnerable to our enemy, and what the Government is doing in that regard.

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Mr. Speaker Sir, it is not correct that orders are being placed now. We have taken initiative to improve the situation from the very first day when we took over and come to know about the situation there. Delay is caused in procurement of some items as they are not available off the shelf. Sometimes it takes one to four years in delivery of the required weapons. I want to tell the hon'ble member ... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI R. L. BHATIA : But you placed the order after the Kargil war, not earlier. -

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Mr. Speaker, Sir, again I would like to say that the perception of the hon'ble member that the orders were placed after Kargil incident is not correct. As I have said that we have paid attention towards this from the very first day and we started the improvement work whatever was possible from the first day and we procured as much sophisticated weapons as possible. But we can spend early that much money on this as has been voted by Parliament. There is no source of money for this purpose other than the amount voted by the Parliament. Therefore, as far as the question as to why sophisticated weapons were not purchased earlier is concerned, we will have to ascertain as to how much amount under capital expenditure was sanctioned for the Ministry of Defence for purchase of weapons during the last ten years and whether the funds were properly utilised i.e. whether any effort was made to purchase the weapons with that money. If you go into these facts you will definitely get reply to your question.

[English]

Pending Projects

+

- * 262. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE :
SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI :

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether several State projects relating to sanitation and development of rural areas are pending with the Union Government for clearance;

(b) if so, the details thereof and since when the said projects have been pending State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for their clearance?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA) : (a) A few projects relating to sanitation and development of rural areas are pending with the Government for clearance.

(b) and (c) Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) under the Restructured Central Rural Sanitation Programme (RCRSP) is being implemented in 58 pilot districts selected by the State Governments in Phase I. The following six proposals have been approved by the National Scheme Sanctioning Committee (NSSC) at its meeting held on 25.11.99 and processed for financial sanction:

1. Khammam District, Andhra Pradesh
2. Vaishali District, Bihar

3. West District, Sikkim
4. South District, Sikkim
5. Cuddalore District, Tamil Nadu
6. Coimbatore District, Tamil Nadu

Four proposals from Maharashtra and one from Tamil Nadu, which were received upto 30th November, 1999, have been scrutinized for next NSSC, which is being convened shortly.

In respect of other projects for development of rural areas, the position is as under:

Under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP), thirty Sector Reform Projects have been received in November-December 1999 from the pilot districts of the States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, Mizoram and Tripura. Funding for these projects would commence after they are approved by the National Scheme Sanctioning Committee.

Under Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP), project proposals are sent by District Rural Development Authorities (DRDAs)/Zilla Parishads/Individual Institutions. To streamline the sanctioning process, the proposals have been screened and prioritised in consultation with the State Governments. The projects will be sanctioned keeping in view the availability of funds and conformity of projects with the guidelines. 115 projects prioritized in 1999 are pending.

Under Rural Housing, the scheme of Innovative Stream for Rural Housing and Habitat Development is being implemented with effect from 1.4.1999 with the objective to promote/propagate innovative and proven construction technologies, designs and materials in the rural areas for construction of cost effective houses and habitat development. Eight proposals have been received under the scheme and the same are under consideration of the Government.

Under Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), nine special projects have been received from the State Governments and the same will be sanctioned after approval by the Project Screening Committee and the Approval Committee.

The State-wise details of the pending projects are given below:

(1)	Andhra Pradesh	10
(2)	Arunachal Pradesh	nil
(3)	Assam	18
(4)	Bihar	2

(5)	Goa	nil
(6)	Gujarat	12
(7)	Haryana	2
(8)	Himachal Pradesh	5
(9)	Jammu & Kashmir	2
(10)	Karnataka	12
(11)	Kerala	1
(12)	Madhya Pradesh	10
(13)	Maharashtra	16
(14)	Manipur	9
(15)	Meghalaya	7
(16)	Mizoram	1
(17)	Nagaland	5
(18)	Orissa	8
(19)	Punjab	2
(20)	Rajasthan	10
(21)	Sikkim	nil
(22)	Tamil Nadu	16
(23)	Tripura	1
(24)	Uttar Pradesh	13
(25)	West Bengal	5
Total		167

Sir, for the first time, I rise in this Lok Sabha to reply to a question and fortunately I have to reply to the question of Shri Ramdas Athawale.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : You have to reply to the question of Shri Owaisi also.

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA: Well, I have to reply to the question of Shri Owaisi also.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: First, the credit goes to Shri Ramdas Athawale.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Shri Sunder Lal Patwa is going to reply to my first question and I expect that reply to my question will also be 'Sunder' (befitting).

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Government of India have started the projects relating to sanitation and development in rural areas. 58 pilot districts have been selected for this purpose and 167 such projects are pending. I would like to say that there are several districts in the country and inclusion of only 58 district will not do any good in this regard. My question relates to pending projects, in the first phase 58 pilot districts have been selected for it but I would like to know as to how many districts will be taken up during the second phase. A provision of Rs. 260.33 crore was made during the Eighth Plan. I would like to know as to how much funds will be allocated for it during the Ninth Five Year Plan because more attention is required to be paid towards sanitation in rural areas. The country can not make progress so long the rural areas are not developed. Therefore, I would like to know as to what is being done by the Department of Rural Development and your Ministry in this regard. An allocation of Rs. 1000 crore is required to be made for it in the next budget. I would like to know whether your Department is considering this issue seriously or not and shall I be getting a befitting reply from you or not?

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the question asked by hon'ble Member has a number of parts. First of all I thank you for helping me by making a proposal in Lok Sabha for allocating Rs. 1000 crore for this department. In the first phase.. (Interruptions) In the Ninth Five Year Plan a provision of Rs. 500 crore has been made for it. Funds allocated in the budget for it during the last two years is being utilised. It is the third year. We will try to utilise the funds which will be allocated in the budget during the fourth and fifth year. I agree with you on this point that programme relating to sanitation and development of rural areas should be intensified.

SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : My second question relates to the settlements of dalits and tribals. More attention should be paid towards them. A large number of people live in jhuggi-jhonpris and Union Government should formulate a programme for providing sanitation there. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether the Government propose to formulate any such programme or not? If not, may I know the reasons therefor?

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : I agree with you. This issue is being taken up on priority basis.

[English]

SHRI ANNASAHEB M. K. PATIL : Thank you, Sir. There are schemes run under the Department of Rural Development, such as, water supply, waste land, development - through DRDA or other institutions - housing, and many other schemes under PMRY, etc. It is observed that whatever schemes are there, these are not run to the extent of expectations. Either some scheme are not worked out well and their efficiency is not proper or there may be no coordination between the State Governments and the Central Government. Therefore, these are not working up to the mark.

I would like to know from the Minister whether there will be any coordinating agency between the State Governments and the Central Government to check up the quality and the funds. It is because these are the schemes run by the Central Government.

Is the Central Government thinking very seriously about the role of the Members of Parliament in order to have some say in the schemes?

[Translation]

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : I am grateful to the hon'ble Member for asking this question. I am thinking on this point and several other hon'ble Members have also pointed out and expressed their dissatisfaction on this issue. As per the procedure all our schemes are implemented through State Governments and for these schemes we work as an agency which sanctions funds. We try our best to monitor the schemes. Mostly we have to depend on the information regarding implementation of schemes as is given by the Union Government. So far as the hon'ble Member's question about the role of Members of Parliament in these schemes is concerned, I would like to say that I am thinking on these lines and trying to improve the involvement of MPs in it so that they are given due credit for it ... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJO SINGH : The whole House says that MPs are not given any importance in these schemes. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the reply given by the hon'ble Minister it has been stated that six proposals have been approved by the National Scheme sanctioning Committee in its meeting held on 25.11.99. By 30th November, 1999 National Scheme sanctioning Committee evaluated four schemes pertaining to Maharashtra and one scheme pertaining to Tamil Nadu. Meeting of the Committee is proposed to be held shortly. I would like to know as to when it will be held and by when the four pending projects of Maharashtra will be cleared? Will the hon'ble Minister state the names of 16 schemes of Maharashtra lying pending with the Union Government?

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Sir, the names of pending projects are not available with me right now but I will inform the hon. Member about it. So far as the issue of according approval to these projects and their implementation is concerned, I would like to say that we will try to do so at the earliest. I will inform you about the exact date.

So far as the issue of involvement of hon'ble Members of Parliament is concerned, I would like to say that hon'ble Members of Parliament are the Members of vigilance and Monitoring Committee and DRDA.... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA : Members of Parliament have no say in such projects. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : No, please. I am appealing to you. Please take your seats.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Rudy, please take your seat. Let him complete.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : No one listen to our problems. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please take your seats. This is not the procedure in the Question Hour. Please understand.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Please let him reply first.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : The funds given by the centre.... (Interruptions)

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : C. O. of the Zila Parishad is the Chairman.... (Interruptions) MPs should be made members of DRDA (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Geete, please take your seat.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Nothing will go on record, except what the hon. Minister says.

... (Interruptions)*

SHRI ANIL BASU : Sir, we have no information about this Committee ... (Interruptions) I may be allowed to ask a supplementary, Sir. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Member, Shri Suresh Jadhav, this is too much. You should know how to behave in the Question Hour.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Please let me complete my reply first.... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Let him complete first .

[Translation]

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Sir, I am well aware of the resentment of hon'ble members. The present system is not adequate, it is not satisfactory.

Some States have merged D.R.D.A. with Zila Panchayats. That is also the position. ... (Interruptions) Please listen... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : No please.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Please let me complete. Mr. Speaker, Sir, yesterday only I have written to the Chief Ministers of States to re-establish the D.R.D.A. in the States where it was abolished earlier. I am determined to implement it and to see that members of Parliament may be appointed as Chairman of D.R.D.A. and vigilance committee ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : No, please, let him complete.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Sir, it should be implemented immediately. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : The Minister is replying on D.R.D.A... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : No please, let him complete. first.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : In spite of

the assurance given by you, nothing has been done in this regard ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Sir, I have utmost regard for the sense of the House. I accept the will of the House and will ensure its compliance as early as possible. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Sir, first of all, I would like to thank the hon. Minister for the announcement that he made just now.

The basic question that I want to put to the hon. Minister is regarding scavengers' problem. We are proceeding towards a new millennium and towards the 21st Century, but in India, till today, we are faced with this scavengers' problem and the Scavengers have to carry the night soil on their heads.

Sir, this Government has introduced two programmes. One is Total Sanitation Campaign, that is TSC, and another one is Restructural Central Rural Sanitation Programme, that is, RCRSP. But it is an unfortunate part of our country that after 52 years of Independence and in spite of these two programmes, the Scavengers still carry the night soil on their heads in some parts of the country. Therefore, I would like to know from the hon. Minister, whether the Government has any proposal or whether the Central Government would instruct the State Governments to eradicate or to abolish this system of scavengers.

Sir, we have a Minium Needs Programme, known as MNP which is basically meant for the eradication of scavengers.

Can you imagine still the poor people are carrying night soils on their heads? Even in West Bengal, the scavenger system still exists. So, I would like to know whether there is any proposal from the Government to see that this system is eradicated.

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Not only proposal but it is our commitment.... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

There is no justification in asking me the question pertaining to 52 years ago. I hail from a small village and I started my public life as a 'panch of a village Panchayat'.

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : You are a leader of the masses.

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Thank you. I am a new enterant to this Lok Sabha. I would try to register my presence in the House. I accept that the problem raised by the hon'ble Member is still prevailing. It lowers the prestige of our nation. It will be our endeavour to eradicate this problem. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I submit to this House that the Hon'ble Prime Minister has entrusted me a responsibility to develop the rural areas which constitute 3/4 of the population of our country. However, I am not hesitant to say that my department is not considered as a glamorous one. Glamour and glitter is confined to urban cities which account for 1/4 of our country.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : Shri Manohar Joshi, Shri Paswan and Shri Yadav are there for that part of our country. They are sitting beside you.

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : I am not glamorous.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : You have glamour in you.

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I will make concrete efforts to abridge the gap between rural areas and urban cities so that rural people may not migrate from the villages to live in Jhuggi-Jhonparies and slum areas. Rather the urban people should go to villages for clean and fresh air.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : Your reply of the first day has made you glamorous.

[English]

Pak Activities in Border Areas

*263. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether increasing Pak military activities and movement of troops and amassing of armoury has been witnessed in certain areas across the Indo-Pak borders in Rajasthan and Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) Certain low level military activities and troop movement have been observed across the Indo-Pak border near Southern Rajasthan and Kutch areas. Monitoring of these activities and necessary precautionary measures continue to be undertaken.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that one of the activities that is being indulged in is the digging of tunnels by the Pakistanis under our borders which are

used for the infiltration of men and materials into our country. These tunnels have been dug even in the recent past right under the nose of the BSF and our Intelligence network. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether this is a fact; and if so, is it tantamount to another Intelligence failure after Kargil? What is the hon. Minister proposing to do about these activities so that such activities are totally arrested in future?

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the same situation was observed in Punjab also. Investigations are going on in this regard. As soon as the report is submitted, we will present it in the House.

[English]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Sir, I would also like to know whether it is fact that Pakistan now has a capability for rapid deployment of missiles along the border which could be carrying nuclear weapons and which can target many cities in India. If this is the case, has the Government operationalised a Plan by which they can counter a full-blown nuclear attack which is operationalised on the Pakistani side by this rapid deployment capability, and, if there is such a Plan, what is the nature of such a Plan?

[Translation]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we all know for a long time that Pakistan has such missiles which can hit any part of our country. That Pakistan is having nuclear capability is not a new fact. It is also a well known fact that missiles can be used both as conventional weapon and as nuclear weapon carrier. We all are fully aware that Pakistan's intention towards us is not good. Our defence department is making all efforts to meet any challenge posed by Pakistan. You have asked about the information in this regard but I am sorry to say that it will not be proper to place the defence strategy before the House.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Sir, the hon'ble Minister has not replied at all to the new point. The new point was regarding the nuclear weapons having rapid deployment capability which has

[English]

not exactly established

[Translation]

but could be deployed

[English]

within a very shortwhile

[Translation]

if required. May I know whether we have any such plans for the safety of our country? You may not tell the nature of these plans but have these plans been prepared or not?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Yes, we have such plans.

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Sir, there has been change of government in Pakistan. After the imposition of military rule in Pakistan, it has become more aggressive. A Kargil like situation may develop at the borders. What are the views of the Government in this regard? Secondly, what steps are being taken by the Government to check smuggling of weapons and drugs by the ISI infiltrators?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I do not agree that Kargil can be repeated in any part of our country. One of the reasons is that Kargil is situated at a very high altitude and from 1972 to 1999 our defence forces had been deployed in some of the areas. During these 27 years, not a single incident of aggression took place by Pakistan. Pakistan has learnt a lesson from Kargil and we have also learnt from it. I do not agree that it is possible for Pakistan to make any attempt of Kargil like aggression in any part of our country. So far as I.S.I. activities and smuggling of narcotics is concerned, many other gangs are operating other than I.S.I. The fight against Narcotics has been going on and will continue in future as well.

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL : Sir, may I know from the hon. Defence Minister whether the Committee, known as the Subramaniam Committee, which was set up to go into the lapses that occurred during the Kargil situation, has already submitted its Report and, if so, what is the reaction of the Government or when will the Government be ready to give its reaction?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Sir, the Committee has not yet submitted its Report. We are expecting that Report shortly. Once it becomes available, one will be able to comment on it.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, I would like to ask, through you, from the hon. Minister whether it is a fact that before this Parliament Session began, Shri Subramaniam called on the Government. It was widely quoted through Doordarshan that the Kargil report had been submitted. Thereafter I wrote to the CEO of Doordarshan to give me the *verbatim* of the news, which he has not provided yet. Thereafter, Shri Subramaniam called on the Prime Minister and it was reported in the next day's newspapers that the report would be submitted by the 15th of December.

Today is the 16th of December. Will the Minister categorically tell us whether before the current Session of the Parliament is over, the report is coming or there is no certainty about the report? What is the mystery behind it? There are two kinds of reports.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : Sir, there is no mystery about this Report. When the Committee will submit its Report, will be decided by the Committee. We expect that Report to reach us very soon. Let me, however, make one point about the Subramaniam Committee members calling on the Prime Minister. The Subramaniam Committee has met with the concerned people more than once and they have tried to elucidate information from various sources and then they have tried to confront others with the information that they have had. Therefore, the point I am making is that the Subramaniam Committee calling on the Prime Minister should not be construed as any kind of an effort to delay the submission of the Report.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a very serious matter. I took it up during Zero Hour also ...
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Dasmunsi, this Question relates to Pak activities in the border area.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Sir, it was reported by the Doordarshan that the Report had been handed over. Then the Report came that Shri Subramaniam had called on the Prime Minister and that the Report would be coming by the 15th of December. Obviously, I feel, without completing the Report, why should be called on the Prime Minister. This is something very peculiar.

SHRIMATI KRISHNA BOSE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Pakistan has been announcing to the world that there is no deployment of troops on the Indo-Pak border and they have actually taken back the troops. They have also declared to the world that they have cut down their Defence expenditure by several crores of rupees. On the one hand, they are saying this, on the other hand, we find that there is no bent of troops and amassing of armoury, and if they are digging tunnels, that is very dangerous. There was a time when we thought there were different centres of power and people were speaking in different voices, but there is now only one centre of power. I would like to ask the Defence Minister whether we have a concrete policy to counter this dichotomy in Pakistan's attitude towards us. Are we, for example, going to the world opinion and trying to tell them about this dichotomy.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, in so far as Pakistan announcing withdrawal of the troops that they had deployed, the fact of the matter is that at the height of Kargil, Pakistan had moved its troops from its peace camps closer to our border. When Pakistan made an announcement some time

back that they mean to withdraw the troops this, is precisely what they were trying to convey that those troops which had been moved forward were being now taken back to their camps.

That did not happen and now, the other day, an announcement had been made that they have finally withdrawn the troops.

In so far as having a policy to counter what Pakistan is saying or doing all over the country, I believe that both at the diplomatic level and also through diplomacy which goes beyond the Ministry of External Affairs where the Service Chiefs interact during their own journeys to different parts of the world, we have consistently been making not just efforts but doing very well in conveying to the rest of the world the kind of situations Pakistan has created on our borders.

[Translation]

SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit to the Minister of Defence that today is 16th December which is celebrated as 'Vijay Diwas'. On this day, India had defeated Pakistani Army and 92 thousand troops of Pakistani Army had surrendered before the Indian Army. Today, we should felicitate the Indian soliders. ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: All right, you resume your seat.

[English]

Funds for IAY

+

*264. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVA:
SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the amount allotted and target set to construct houses under Indra Awaas Yojana during the current financial year, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government have a proposal to construct houses under the above scheme during the Ninth Five Year Plan; and

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA) : (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) The State-wise amount allotted and target set under Indra Awaas Yojana during the current financial year is at Annexure-I.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The houses constructed under Indra Awaas Yojana during first two years of Ninth Five Year Plan and targets fixed for new construction/upgradation during the current financial year are at Annexure-II. The targets to be fixed under IAY for the remaining two years of the Ninth Five Year Plan will be dependent on the quantum of budgetary support provided under the Scheme.

Annexure-I

Amount allotted and target set under Indra Awaas Yojana during current financial year, (1999-2000).

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	States/UT's	Allocation			Total target for new construction/upgradation
		Centre	State	Total	
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Andhra Pradesh	11036.00	3678.67	14714.67	88288
2.	Arunachal Pr.	754.00	251.33	1005.33	5666
3.	Assam	15658.00	5219.33	20877.33	121765
4.	Bihar	38598.00	12866.00	51464.00	308784
5.	Goa	68.00	22.67	90.67	544
6.	Gujarat	3243.00	1081.00	4324.00	25944
7.	Haryana	1171.00	390.33	1561.33	9368
8.	Himachal Pr.	515.00	171.67	686.67	3870
9.	Jammu & Kash.	618.00	206.00	824.00	4644
10.	Karnataka	5898.00	1966.00	7864.00	47184
11.	Kerala	3552.00	1184.00	4736.00	28416
12.	Madhya Pr.	9183.00	3061.00	12244.00	73464
13.	Maharashtra	10585.00	3528.33	14113.33	84680
14.	Manipur	693.00	231.00	924.00	5208
15.	Meghalaya	1057.00	352.33	1409.33	7944
16.	Mizoram	260.00	86.67	346.67	1954
17.	Nagaland	653.00	217.67	870.67	4907
18.	Orissa	9154.00	3051.33	12205.33	73232
19.	Punjab	745.00	248.33	993.33	5960
20.	Rajasthan	3233.00	1077.67	4310.67	25864

1	2	3	4	5	6
21. Sikkim		122.00	40.67	162.67	917
22. Tamilnadu		5848.00	1948.67	7794.67	46788
23. Tripura		1433.00	477.67	1910.67	10769
24. Uttar Pr.		23565.00	7855.00	31420.00	187629
25. West Bengal		12064.00	4021.33	16085.33	96127
26. A&N Islands		129.00	0.00	129.00	727
27. D&N Haveli		69.00	0.00	69.00	414
28. Daman & Diu		27.00	0.00	27.00	162
29. Lakshadweep		3.00	0.00	3.00	17
30. Pondicherry		67.00	0.00	67.00	402
Total		160000.00	53234.66	213233.66	1271618

Annexure -II

State-wise number of houses constructed during first two years of Ninth Five Year Plan and target for 1999-2000

Name of the State	Houses Constructed		Total Target 1999-2000 for new construction/ upgradation
	1997-98	1998-99	
1	2	3	4
Andhra Pradesh	104115	61430	88288
Arunachal Pradesh	932	470	5666
Assam	17516	20937	121765
Bihar	103506	125082	308784
Goa	512	482	544
Gujarat	24439	21820	25944
Haryana	4505	10043	9368
Himachal Pradesh	1843	3874	3870
Jammu & Kashmir	6172	5400	4644
Karnataka	43522	37369	47184
Kerala	12834	9452	28416
Madhya Pradesh	101549	102901	73464
Maharashtra	60709	54532	84680
Manipur	1096	1125	5208

1	2	3	4
Meghalaya	316	734	7944
Mizoram	302	519	1954
Nagaland	1933	2290	4907
Orissa	50023	50871	73232
Punjab	3235	3831	5960
Rajasthan	34858	32955	25864
Sikkim	590	543	917
Tamil Nadu	55830	68207	46768
Tripura	1665	3235	10769
Uttar Pradesh	94535	181274	187629
West Bengal	43931	36246	96127
A & N Islands	6	12	727
D & N Haveli	100	6	414
Daman & Diu	38	0	162
Lakshadweep	110	40	17
Pondicherry	214	290	402
TOTAL	770936	835770	1271618

[English]

SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government has any plans to construct more houses in the most backward districts of the country during the remaining part of the Ninth Plan and if so the details thereof. I also want to know whether the Government follows any reservation system or any economic criteria in allotting the houses to the poor people and if so the details thereof.

[Translation]

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : As far as the question of construction of houses under 'Indira Awaas Yojana' is concerned, allocation of houses is done by Gram Sabha and basically the houses are allocated under 'Indira Awaas Yojana' to the people who are living below poverty line.

[English]

SHRI P.D. ELANGO VAN : Sir, I would also like to know as to how many houses were, so far, constructed in the districts of Dharmapuri and Salem in Tamil Nadu under the scheme. Kindly provide me the block-wise details for the last three years.

How does the selection of beneficiaries made? Is the power vested with the District Collector or is the selection made by the State Government or the Central Government? What is the role of M.Ps. in the selection of beneficiaries?

[Translation]

SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, in reply to the earlier question, I had explained the role of hon'ble Members in this regard. It will be our endeavour to see that M.Ps. may play an important role in it. As far as the question of district-wise allocation of houses is concerned, if hon'ble Member gives a separate notice in this regard, then only I will be able to provide information in regard to the houses constructed so far.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Foodgrains under PDS

*265. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering the double the quantity of foodgrains sold to the poor or the people living below poverty line at prices which are just about 25 per cent lesser than the open market prices;

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering to exclude the 60 per cent people who are living above poverty line from the benefit of Public Distribution System; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR) : (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Training Aircraft

*266. SHRI G. GANGA REDDY:
DR. (SMT.) C. SUGUNA KUMARI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present training aircraft is not quite suitable for advanced training in Air Force;

(b) if so, the action taken to induct Advanced Jet Trainers into Air Force on a priority basis; and

(c) the source of the Advanced Jet Trainer proposed to be acquired along with its delivery schedule?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) Presently, Fighter Pilots of the Air Force are being given advance training on MIG 21 aircraft which is old and is in the process of being phased out. All available options for induction of Advanced Jet Trainers (AJT) into the Air Force are being evaluated. These include obtaining AJT on lease and subsequent domestic production on the basis of transfer of technology. Technical discussion with the short-listed vendors of AJT is likely to be taken up soon.

(c) The source of AJT and its delivery schedule have not so far been finalised.

Replacement of ageing Aircraft in Air India

* 267. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA:
SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India has cut down its net loss from Rs. 122 crore in the first six months of last fiscal year to a mere Rs. 5.5 crore in the first half of this year;

(b) if so, whether they have also felt an immediate need of induction of new Aircraft for replacing its ageing fleet;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the total expenditure involved in replacing ageing fleet; and

(e) the time by which the Government are likely to take a final decision in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) During the period April, 1999 to September, 1999, Air India has incurred a net loss of Rs. 5.29 crore against a net loss of Rs. 127.37 crore for the same period of last year.

(b) to (e) Air India has been working at its fleet plan for sometime, but has not taken final decision so far.

Development of Wasteland

* 268. COL. (RETD) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the Wasteland development schemes sent by State Governments including Rajasthan Government for approval and funding during the last three years;

(b) the progress made so far in this regard; and

(c) the total funds spent on such schemes during this period and the amount that is earmarked for current year?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA) : (a) The Department of Land

Resources is implementing the "Integrated Wastelands Development Project" Scheme for development of non-forest Wastelands on watershed basis. Under this Scheme project proposals are prepared by District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) / Zilla Parishads and submitted to this Department for sanction. Under this Scheme projects are sanctioned on project to project basis for a period of 4 to 5 years and funds are released to the DRDAs/Zilla Parishads for implementation of the projects. 343 projects have been received from the State Governments/DRDAs during the last three years including Rajasthan State.

(b) 132 Nos. of projects under IWDP Scheme have been sanctioned by the Department of Land Resources from 1996-97 till date.

(c) Under IWDP Scheme an amount of Rs. 82 crores has been earmarked during 1999-2000. The details of funds released under Integrated Wastelands Development Projects Scheme during the last three years (1996-97 to 1998-99) including Rajasthan State are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount (Rs. in crores)</u>
1996-97	50.80
1997-98	53.86
1998-99	61.99

Air Services between UK and India

*269. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether British Airways has approached the Indian Government to open up its skies and ease restrictions on air services between UK and India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government of India on the request/approach of the British Airways; and

(d) the criteria adopted for dealing with the request for opening up our skies to the foreign airlines?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) to (d) The Government of UK have been seeking bilateral negotiations for liberalising the existing air traffic rights between India and UK. Although two rounds of negotiations were held in 1996 to discuss this issue, no agreement could be reached, as the Government of UK had expressed their inability to assure convenient slots to Air India at Heathrow Airport for operationalising the additional rights. The Government of UK have now requested for resumption of the negotiations. The Indian Government has conveyed its willingness to hold bilateral discussions some time early next year.

Deal for Russian Aircraft Carrier 'Gorshkov'

*270. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Navy proposes to buy Russia's ailing aircraft carrier Gorshkov;

(b) if so, whether that 20 year old aircraft carrier lies ailing in the Black Sea with boiler explosion damaging it 5 years ago;

(c) if so, the amount likely to be spent for retrofitting the ship with modern weapons; and

(d) the opinion of experts in regard to the deal especially in view of the fact that spares from Russia are hard to come by?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) The Government of Russian Federation have offered to gift aircraft carrier 'Admiral Gorshkov' to India. Experts from the Naval Headquarters have evaluated the ship in 1995, 1998 and 1999. The Naval Headquarters have been pursuing the acquisition of aircraft carrier Gorshkov, primarily for replacement of the decommissioned warship 'INS VIKRANT'.

During the ship's longest operational deployment from May to December 1988, the warship sailed from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean and later to the naval port of 'SEVEROMARSK' to form part of the northern fleet of Russia. Western media had, then, reported that she had a boiler tube burst resulting in a major fire thereby curtailing operational exploitation. The Russians had however denied this and claimed the incident to be of minor nature as a result of steam pipe burst due to crew error. NHQ have reported that this was verified by the Indian Navy's team during the course of their detailed discussions and visit to machinery spaces in 1995. The ship is presently anchored at 'SEVMASH' shipyard, in the port city of SEVRODVINSK which is located, in the White Sea.

It is stated that before induction of Admiral Gorshkov into the Indian Navy, she has to be repaired, retrofitted, modernized, modified and suitably equipped with weapon systems. An offer has been received from the Russians indicating that the refit and modernization would, approximately, cost 549 million US Dollars. The complete details are yet to be worked out. In addition to considering the offer of the Russians for acquiring the warship, Government is also taking the necessary steps to arrive at a precise cost in consultation with the Naval Head Quarters and the Russian side.

Necessary steps are also being taken by the Government to ensure the availability of spares, if the ship is inducted into the Indian Navy.

On-going Railway Projects in Western Region

* 271. SHRI NAMDEO HARBAJI DIWATHE:
SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the progress of on-going railway projects in terms of physical and financial targets in the western region under Western, Central and South Central Railways;

(b) if so, the present status of each of these projects;

(c) whether the Government have received some fresh proposals from the State Governments of Western Region for construction/gauge conversion/doubling/Electrification of Railway lines under Western, Central and South Central Railways; and

(d) if so, the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Fresh proposals received from the State Governments of Western Region i.e. after 01.04.99, are for the following works:

1. Ahmedabad-Vijapur Gauge Conversion
2. Windmill Station to Bedi Port area new line
3. Jamnagar-Bedi Port-Rosipier new line

The proposals are under examination.

Statement*Central Railway*

PLAN	PROJECT	KMS	COST	Exp up to 31-3-99	OUTLAY 99-2000	REMARKS
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW LINE	Panvel-Karjat	28	107	15.46	8	The complete land has been acquired and the work on the 2.7 km long tunnel has been taken up. Earthwork and major bridge in 13 km length has also been taken up.
NEW LINE	Baramati-Lonad	54	75	0.001	2	Necessary clearances have been obtained. Final location survey, land acquisition is being taken up. Work will be taken up once land is made available by State Government.
NEW LINE	Kopargaon-Shirdi	16	32	0.001	0.001	Necessary clearance has been received. However, based on representation received, an alternative alignment from Puntamba to Shirdi has been approved by Planning Commission. Final location survey and land acquisition will be taken up shortly.
NEW LINE	Amravati-Narkher	138	175.3	26.33	6	70% of the land has been acquired. Earthwork contract for 18 section out of 27 has been finalised and work is in progress. Work is being regulated as per fund allotment for 1999-2000.
NEW LINE	Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli Vajjnath	250	353	0.84	3	Final location survey has been completed for 15 km from Ahmednagar end and 11 km from Beed to Talegaon end Land acquisition plans & papers have been submitted to the State Government for 15 km from Ahmednagar end and 11 km from Paarli-Vajjnath end & the work would be progressed once they make available the land. Station building at Beed is under progress.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
GAUGE CONVERSION	Miraj-Latur	359	339	61.87	46.5	The work is being progressed in phases. In the first phase, work from Latur to Latur Road (42 km) and Kurduwadi to Pandharpur is progressing. Kurduwadi Pandharpur is targeted for completion during 1999-2000. On Kurduwadi-Latur (119 km) earthwork and bridges are in progress.
DOUBLING	Daund-Bigwan	27.7	32.42	12.27	20	The work will be completed by March, 2000.
DOUBLING	Diva-Vasai	42	94.85	54.85	40	The work is progressing well. In phase-I, 11 km from Vasai Road to Kaman has been completed and 17 km Kaman to Bhiwandi is targeted by March, 2000. Bhiwandi to Diva is targeted for March 2001 subject to removal of encroachments and availability of resources.
DOUBLING	Panvel-Roha-Land acquisition	75	4.1	3.95	0.15	Land acquisition is expected to be completed in 1999-2000.
DOUBLING	Sewagram-Chitoda	3.97	12.58	4.58	8	Earthwork and minor bridges has been completed. Ballast supply, building work and track linking is in progress. Work will be completed by 28.2.2000.
DOUBLING	Diva Kaylan doubling of 5th-6th line	11	47.7	0	0.5	New work included in Budget, 1999-2000. Detailed planning has been taken up.
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PROJECT	Kurta-Thane 5th and 6th line Bhandup to Thane (Ph.II)	10	58.3	2	13.5	Estimate sanctioned. Work in progress is likely to be delayed due to delay in R & R of 450 hutments and shops from Railway land. Progress of work is 13.5%.
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PROJECT	Kurta-Thane 5th & 6th line (Phase I)	8	49.84	31.69	22.5	Progress of work is 42%. Progress of work hampered due to heavy encroachment of Railway land and due to delay in acquisition of built up structures.
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PROJECT	Thane Turbe Nerul/Vashi part of corridor no. 2 in new Mumbai	22.5	403.4	67.87	15.3	Physical progress is 32%. CIDCO lagging behind the schedule in the works to be executed by it due to financial crunch faced by it. Project can be commissioned within target with curtailed station facilities but for delay in acquisition of land at Thane (East) which is likely to delay the project.
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PROJECT	Seawood-Uran electrified line	22.3	495.4	3.2	6.3	Due to financial crunch faced by CIDCO, work has been split in two phases. First phase, with construction of single line in Belapur-Seawood-Uran section, is targeted to be completed by March, 2003 subject to availability of funds from CIDCO.
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PROJECT	Belapur-Panvel Doubling	10.9	279.8	64.45	12.6	Physical progress is 42%. CIDCO lagging behind the schedule in the works to be executed by it due to financial crunch faced by it. Project can be commissioned within target with curtailed station facilities.

South Central Railway

(Rs. in Crores)

PLAN	PROJECT	KMS	COST	Exp up to 31-3-99	OUTLAY 99-2000	REMARKS
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW LINE	Munirabad-Mehboobnagar	222	439	4.53	4	Final Location Survey has been completed. Work will be taken up once the land becomes available.
GAUGE CONVERSION &	Secunderabad-Mudkhed & Jankhampet-Bodhan	256	276.3	5	20	The work has been taken up in first phase from Mudkhed-Nizamabad (96 Km). Earthwork and minor bridges are in progress. This phase will be completed in coming years subject to availability of resources.
GAUGE CONVERSION	Mudkhed-Adilabad	162	170.2	6.57	1	The work is in progress under BOLT. The progress of work is slow and is only 15%. The requisite concessions in contract term have been given and funds are being tied up by him. The work is expected to be completed in the year 2000-2001.
DOUBLING	Hospet-Guntakal (Gauge-Conv.)	115	159.1	10.12	20	Final location survey has been completed & estimate has been sanctioned. Tenders for Earth work, minor bridges and ballast are under finalisation. Work will be taken up shortly. Target date not yet fixed.
RAILWAY ELECTRIFI- CATION	Renigunta-Guntakal- Hospet	448	251	4.43	0.0001	This work frozen earlier has been defrozen in November 1998. Preliminary works have been taken up. TD March 2004.

Western Railway

PLAN	PROJECT	KMS	COST	Exp. 98-99	OUTLAY 99-2000	REMARKS
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NEW LINE	Dausa-Gangapur	92.7	151.84	1.05	1	Final location survey has been completed. Land acquisition papers for first block section covering 34 hectares for first section Dausa-Bamaniya submitted to State Government.
NEW LINE	Kapadvanj-Modasa	59.7	40.81	15.54	7	This work though sanctioned in 78-79 remained frozen for several years. The Gauge conversion work between Nadiad & Kapadvanj which was a part of the sanctioned project was completed in 92-93. The new line portion was defrozen in 94-95. Work is now in progress and is expected to be completed by June 2000.
1 NEW LINE	Godhra-Indore Dewas- Maksi	316	297.14	17.12	4	This work is being executed in phases. The first phase work between Dewas & Maksi is now in progress. Out of 8 major bridges,

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
						work is in progress on 6 bridges and tenders for the balance have been invited. Our of 49 minor bridges 48 have been completed and remaining one is in progress. The other items like earthwork and ballast supply are also in progress. This section is expected to be completed in the 9th Plan period, subject to availability of resources.
2 GAUGE CONVERSION	Neemuch-Ratlam	135	116.74	4.57	5	Work on long lead items has been taken up. The work will be programmed and completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.
2 GAUGE CONVERSION	Bhildi-Viramgam	157	59.88	5.01	7	Work is in progress between Viramgram and Meshana and is being progressed as per availability of resources. The target for completion of this work has not yet been fixed.
GAUGE CONVERSION	Rajkot-Veraval	185	100	25.66	3	Earthwork, minor bridges and strengthening of major bridges have been taken up and are in progress. The work is expected to be completed during the coming years depending upon availability of resources.
GAUGE CONVERSION	Gandhidham-Bhuj	58	41.04	8.22	20	The work is in good progress and is targeted for completion by June 2000.
GAUGE CONVERSION	Gadhidham-Palanpur	313	318	0.0001	10	New work included in Budget 1998-99. Work would be taken up after obtaining necessary clearances.
GAUGE CONVERSION	Agra-Bandikui	152	161.03	10.06	10	The work is being progressed as per availability of resources. No TD has yet been fixed.
GAUGE CONVERSION	Ajmer-Udaipur- Chittaurgarh	300	262	20.5	25	The work is in progress between Udaipur and Chittaurgarh in first phase. No target date has yet been fixed.
GAUGE CONVERSION	Wandaner-Malia Miyana	97	82.48	15.01	35	The work is in good progress. The first phase from Morbi to Maliya Miyana and Dahinsara-Naviakhi has been completed. The rest of the section is targeted for completion by Dec., 2000 subject to availability of resources.
GAUGE CONVERSION	Surendernagar- Bhavnagar	385	356.11	1	30	The CCEA clearance has been received. The modalities of partial private funding for the project are being explored. The work on long lead items such as major bridges, shifting of OHE crossings has been taken up.
GAUGE CONVERSION	Dharangadhara-Kuda siding	22	8.77	0.1	1	This work is being done on 1/3 cost sharing basis with the Gujarat Government and the Ministry of Industry. The work is in progress and will be completed by Dec. 2000.
DOUBLING	Bolai-Kalisindh-Kisoni- Bercha	25.7	49.29	22.43	10	The work is in progress on 4 block sections and is being regulated as per availability of

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
						resources. Maksi-Pirumrod (7.75 km) completed and Bolai-Kallsindh (5.50 km) targeted by March 2000.
DOUBLING	Kalapipal-Phanda/Maksi-Bhopal	41.5	53	0.01	0.01	This work has been temporarily frozen owing to low operational priority and constraint of resources.
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PROJECT	Autoblock signalling of Virar-Dahanu Road	64	27.19	0.36	11.7	Detailed estimate has been sanctioned in Sept., 1998. Work is progressing as per schedule.
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PROJECT	Santacruz-Borivali 5th line	15.8	82.42	43.46	18	Physical progress is 72%. Progress of work affected by delay in eviction of unauthorised encroachments. Revised estimate of Rs. 82.42 cr. inclusive of proposed material modification of separate line of FCI siding has been approved. First block section from Santacruz to Andheri is expected to be commissioned by 31.3.2000.
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT PROJECT	Quadrupling between Borivali and Virar	26	401.66	7.04	36	Work originally proposed under BOLT scheme was debolted in 1998. Earthwork and construction of minor and major bridges and quarters in progress. Tenders for consultancy works for important bridge No. 73 & 75 have been awarded and for execution of work, tenders are under process of finalisation.
RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION	Udhna-Jalgaon	306	138.12	12.06	12.2	Target is March 2002. Preliminary works taken up. The work is progressing as per schedule.

Unethical Trade Practices

*272. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:
SHRI ADHIR CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Goods once sold will not be Taken back" as reported in the *Times of India* dated November 12, 1999;

(b) if so, whether a large number of consumer goods manufacturing firms/shopkeepers are thus indulging in unethical trade practices by ignoring the rights of the consumers;

(c) if so, whether the Government propose to take any action in such cases; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR) : (a) to (d) According to the provisions of the Consumer

Protection Act, 1986, the seller of the goods are liable to repair/replace the defective goods or return the money etc. to the consumer. Therefore, "Goods once sold will not be taken back" etc. are not enforceable under the law. The provisions of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 are quite adequate and effective to protect the interest of consumers in case of defective goods purchased by/delivered to the consumers for due consideration. Aggrieved consumers have the right to seek redressal against unfair trade practices in the consumer courts for getting appropriate relief.

[Translation]

Vigilance and Monitoring Committees

* 273. DR. BALIRAM:
SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Monitoring and Vigilance Committees at the district/block/panchayat levels have been set up to monitor the implementation of various Rural Development Programmes;

(b) is so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether these Committees are functioning properly; and

(d) if not, the effective measures being taken to see that funds are not misused?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA) : (a) Yes Sir, the State Governments were advised to form Vigilance & Monitoring Committee at state, district and block levels to supervise, exercise vigilance and monitor the various programmes implemented by this Ministry.

(b) A Statement showing the state-wise status of constitution of Vigilance & Monitoring Committees is enclosed.

(c) The Ministry has been regularly taking up, with the State/UT Governments, the issue of setting up and proper functioning of these committees. In many states the committees have already started functioning.

(d) Besides the Vigilance & Monitoring Committees the Ministry has evolved a comprehensive system of effective monitoring and evaluation through Progress Reports, Financial Returns/Audit Reports, intensive inspections both by Central Government as well as by the State Government officials, review by various committees and Concurrent Evaluation reports.

Funds under different programmes are mostly released in two instalments every year. In all such cases, for the release of second instalment, the DRDAs/Zila Parishads are required to furnish Utilisation Certificates and audit reports.

Statement

State-wise status of constitution of Vigilance & Monitoring Committees

Sl. No.	State	Level at which Vig. & Committee constituted		
		State	District	Blocks
1	2	3	4	5
1	Andhra Pr.	Yes	Yes	Yes
2	Arunachal Pr.	Yes	Yes	Yes
3	Assam	Yes	Yes	Yes
4	Bihar	Yes	Yes	Yes
5	Goa	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
6	Gujarat	Yes	Yes	Yes
7	Haryana	Yes	Yes	Yes
8	Himachal Pr.	Yes	Yes	Yes
9	J & K	#	#	#

1	2	3	4	5
10	Karnataka	Yes	@	@
11	Kerala	Yes	Yes	Yes
12	Madhya Pr.	Yes	Yes	Yes
13	Maharashtra	Yes	Yes	Yes
14	Manipur	Yes	Yes	Yes
15	Meghalaya	Yes	Yes	Yes
16	Mizoram	Yes	Yes	Yes
17	Nagaland	Yes	Yes	Yes
18	Orissa	Yes	Yes	Yes
19	Punjab	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
20	Rajasthan	Yes	Yes	Yes
21	Sikkim	Yes	Not Available	Not Available
22	Tamil Nadu	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
23	Tripura	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
24	Uttar Pr.	Yes	Not Available	Not Available
25	West Bengal	Yes	Yes	Yes
26	A & N Island	Yes	Yes	Yes
27	D & N Haveli	Yes	Yes	Yes
28	Daman & Diu	Yes	Yes	Same as Dist
29	Lakshadweep	Yes	Yes	Yes
30	Pondicherry	Yes	Same as State	Yes

@ In Karnataka, Karnataka Development Programme Review Committee has been formed at the state, district and taluk levels, which perform similar function as that of Vigilance & Monitoring Committee.

In Jammu & Kashmir there is a system of District Development Boards which reviews the Rural Development Schemes. State govt. is of the view that setting up of another district level committee will lead to duplication.

Consumer Protection Act

*274. SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:
SHRI MANSINH PATEL:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases registered under Consumer Protection Act, 1986 during each of the last two years, State-wise;

(b) whether the State Governments are not implementing the Consumer Protection Act properly;

(c) whether any complaints have been received thereto and if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) whether the guilty persons are benefiting due to the delay in justice; and

(e) is so, the steps taken/proposed for early disposal of the cases?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR) : (a) As per the information available, the State-wise number of cases filed since inception of the State Commissions and District Fora is given in the enclosed Statement. Separate year-wise figures are not maintained.

(b) to (e) State Governments are properly implementing the provisions of the Consumer Protection Act. However, some incidents of non-functioning of State redressal fora due to vacancy in the posts of President/Members, etc. have come to the notice of the Central Government. The Central Government in such cases, advises the State Governments, who are responsible for implementing the Act, to take appropriate remedial action.

Statement

STATE/UT	CONSUMER COURTS	
	Since inception	
	Number of Cases filed in	
	STATE COMMISSIONS	DISTRICT FORA
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	9198	107065
Arunachal Pradesh	19	181
Assam	1174	6675
Bihar	5301	40523
Goa	959	3220
Gujarat	7350	58425
Haryana	8262	64593
Himachal Pradesh	1997	12958
Jammu & Kashmir	3232	10436
Karnataka	7827	59515
Kerala	11867	98120
Madhya Pradesh	7120	55973
Maharashtra	14799	89316
Manipur	40	791
Meghalaya	70	237

	1	2	3
Mizoram		17	505
Nagaland		4	89
Orissa		7010	34475
Punjab		5337	32528
Rajasthan		17179	127660
Sikkim		14	90
Tamil Nadu		10596	49221
Tripura		192	880
Uttar Pradesh		22835	222430
West Bengal		5135	49086
Andaman & Nicobar		21	199
Chandigarh		1939	14998
D & N Havell		0	32
Daman & Diu		1	64
Delhi		9496	66547
Lakshadweep		7	35
Pondicherry		469	1571

[English]

Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Programme

*275. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Projects for which assistance from World Bank and other international agencies has been received;

(b) the details of assistance received during the last three years and current year so far, project-wise;

(c) the names of projects on which work has been undertaken; and

(d) the progress made so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA) : (a) to (d) The following Integrated Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Projects have been/are being undertaken in the country with the support of World Bank:

(i) The Maharashtra Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Project with a project cost

of US\$ 140.8 million covering 560 villages in 10 districts of Maharashtra was undertaken with World Bank assistance. The project started in 1991 and was completed in June, 1998.

- (ii) The UP Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Project costing US\$ 71.0 million and targeted to benefit 1000 villages in 19 districts of Uttar Pradesh has been undertaken with World Bank assistance. The project implementation started in August, 1996 and is expected to be completed by May, 2002.

- (iii) The Karnataka Intergrated Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Project with an estimated cost of US\$ 92.0 million and expected to cover 1113 villages in 16 districts of Karnataka has been undertaken with World Bank assistance. The project implementation started in 1993 and is expected to be completed in December 1999.

As per the information furnished by the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, the details of World Bank assistance received during the last three years and the current year (upto October 1999) in respect of the above projects is as under:

State	Name of the Project	Assistance received (In US\$ million)			
		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000 (upto Oct 99)
Maharashtra	Maharashtra Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Project	26.690	13.024	19.908	
Karnataka	Karnataka Integrated Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Project	8.997	8.134	29.119	10.276
Uttar Pradesh	UP Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Project	2.403	0.703	6.258	0.412

Investment on Unprofitable Rail Lines

*276. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have incurred a huge loss due to investment on unprofitable railway lines;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the names of unprofitable railway lines, zone-wise;

(c) whether the Government are considering to close down such lines;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the manner in which the Government propose to make up the loss suffered thereby?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details are given in the enclosed Statement.

(c) There is no immediate proposal to close down such lines.

(d) In this regard, Railways are keeping a dialogue with the State Governments concerned as suggested by various expert Committees who have examined this issue.

(e) Railways have also suggested to the State Governments to share the losses on a 50:50 basis but this has also not received favourable response. Railways, however, are making efforts to reduce the losses in their operation.

Statement

Names of uneconomic branch lines and their losses during 1998-99

(Figures in thousands of Rs.)

S. No.	Name of the Branch line	Cost	Net Loss
<i>Central Railway</i>			
1	Neral-Matheran (NG-21Kms.)	1420	54826
2	Karjat-Khopoli (BG-15 Kms.)	1856	11809
3	Gwallor-Bhind (NG-84 Kms.)	2721	35120
4	Gwallor-Sheopur-Kalan (NG-200 Kms.)	6579	104969
5	Dholpur-Tantpur-Sirmutra (NG-89 Kms.)	900	32447
6	Ait-Konch (BG-14 Kms.)	609	16817
7	Kurduwadi-Miraj-Latur (NG-327 Kms.)	17913	95808
8	Pachora-Jamner (NG-56 Kms.)	1823	13276
9	Majri-Rajpur (BG-21 Kms.)	953	5206

S. No.	Name of the Branch line	Cost	Net Loss
10	Guna-Maksi (BG-193 Kms.)	206951	43191
11	Daund-Baramati (BG-44 Kms.)	1509	12900
	TOTAL	243234	426369
<i>Eastern Railway</i>			
12	Bhimgarh-Palasthali (BG-27 Kms.)	2550	4221
13	Barasat-Hasnabad (BG-53 Kms.)	26412	28339
14	Santipur-Nabadwipghat (NG-27.5 Kms.)	1196	9653
15	Bardhaman-Katwa (NG-53 Kms.)	2618	12607
16	Bhagalpur-Mandarhill (BG-50 Kms.)	4670	11032
17	Baruipur-Lakshmikanpur (BG-37 Kms.)	12434	1765
18	Jamalpur-Monghyr (BG-10 Kms.)	624	2763
19	Sonarpur-Canning (BG-29 Kms.)	8785	14659
20	Dildarnagar-Tarighat (BG-19 Kms.)	1320	1860
21	Kalyani-Kalyani Simanta (BG-4 Kms.)	8630	8964
22	Tinpahar-Rajmahal (BG-12 Kms.)	770	2105
23	Laimikantapur-Kulpi (BG-19 Kms.)*	351589	63326
	TOTAL	421598	161294
<i>Northern Railway</i>			
24	Rohtak-Gohana (BG-32 Kms.)	3043	12157
25	Gohana-Panipat (BG-39 Kms.)	3256	12217
26	Rohtak-Bhiwani (BG-49 Kms.)	9200	38217
27	Shamli-Saharanpur (BG-64 Kms.)	317131	44173
28	Delhi-Shahadra-Shamli (BG-87 Kms.)	285184	17393
29	Tuglakabad-Shakurbasti (BG-26.60 Kms.)	55920	29953
30	Kalka-Shimla (NG-97 Kms.)	27793	116132
31	Lalgarh-Srikolayat Jee BG-46 Kms.)	1064	15500
32	Garhi-Harsaru-Farukhnagar (MG-11 Kms.)	648	2816
33	Sardar Shahar-Ratangarh (MG-43 Kms.)	705	9724
34	Dalmau-Daryapur (BG-25 Kms.)	2224	4788
35	Amritsar-Attari (BG-25 Kms.)	2788	11085
36	Phagwara-Nawan Shahar Doaba (BG-36 Kms.)	9977	31117
37	Batala-Quadrian (BG-19 Kms.)	897	14903

S. No.	Name of the Branch line	Cost	Net Loss
38	Verka-Derababa Nanak (BG-46 Kms.)	7707	73285
39	Amritsar-Khemkaran (BG-77 Kms.)	8901	8082
40	Rai Ka Bagh-Pokhran (BG-192 Kms.)	5088	21996
41	Merta Rd. Merta City (BG-14.5 Kms.)	238	3278
42	Raniwara-Bhildi (MG-71 Kms.)	16022	51669
43	Samdari-Munabeo (MG-248 Kms.)	4111	83242
	TOTAL	761897	601727
<i>North Eastern Railway</i>			
44	Banmankhi-Bihariganj (MG-27 Kms.)	2301	19315
45	Sakri-Jayanagar (MG-70 Kms.)	3319	60078
46	Narkatiaganj-Bhikhnatori (MG-47 Kms.)	691	15414
47	Salempur-Barhaj Bazar (BG-22 Kms.)	748	7433
48	Indara-Dohrighat (MG-40 Kms.)	865	14229
49	Mankapur-Katra (BG-30 Kms.)	503	19367
50	Anandnagar-Nautanwa (MG-49 Kms.)	3477	16131
51	Jhanjharpur-Laukaha Bazar (MG-43 Kms.)	786	29438
52	Mathura-Vrindaban (MG-13 Kms.)	656	5196
53	Mandhana-Brahmavarta (MG-9 Kms.)	421	2965
54	Kashipur-Ramnagar (BG-27 Kms.)	1457	23367
55	Rampur-New Haldwani (BG-89.16 Kms.)*	766900	56520
	TOTAL	782126	271453
<i>Northeast Frontier Railway</i>			
56	New Jalpaiguri-Darjeeling (NG-88 Kms.)	8795	43107
57	Kathihar-Maniharighat MG-36 Kms.)	1874	31599
58	Kathihar-Jogbani (MG-108 Kms.)	4522	87253
59	Singabad-Old Malda (BG-24 Kms.)	9350	21967
60	Barsoi-Radhikapur (MG-53 Kms.)	2219	987
61	Alipurduar-Bamanhat (MG-71 Kms.)	3141	45269
62	Tezpur-Rangapara North (MG-27 Kms.)	1081	28815
63	Fakiragram-Dhubri (MG-65 Kms.)	2722	28726
64	Karimganj-Mahisashan (MG-10 Kms.)	729	8632
65	Baraigram-Dulia-Cherra (MG-28 Kms.)	1675	7528

S. No.	Name of the Branch line	Cost	Net Loss
66	Katakhal-Lalabazar (MG-36 Kms.)	891.	8622
67	Chaparmukh-Silghat (MG-81 Kms.) & Chaparmukh-Haibargan (BG-27 Kms.)	110408	9142
68	Simulgrui-Naginimara (MG-14 Kms.)	748	739
69	Mariani-Jorhat Town (MG-17 Kms.)	2549	10363
70	Simulguri-Moranhat (MG-54 Kms.)	2868	2047
71	Makum-Dangari (Mg-30 Kms.)	2583	642
72	Dharmanagar-Pencharthal-Kumarghat (MG-41.08 Kms.)*	482400	68245
73	Silchar-Jiribam (MG-49.16 Kms.)*	447750	62471
74	Lalabazar-Jamira-Bairabi (MG-48.15 Kms.*440022		67871
75	Balipara-Gamani-Bhalukpong (MG-35 Kms.)*	165886	41628
	TOTAL	1692213	575653
<i>Southern Railway</i>			
76	Shoranur-Nilambur (BG-66 Kms.)	10983	4071
77	Villupuram-Pondicherry (MG-38 Kms.)	1868	12432
78	Thiruthurai-poondi-Kodikkarai (MG-46 Kms.)	4093	3151
79	Mettupalayam-Udhagamandalam (MG-46 Kms.)	9498	28843
80	Madurai-Bodinayakanur (MG-90 Kms.)	8179	13909
81	Nanjangud-Chamraj Nagar (MG-35 Kms.)	1516	19409
82	Tirunelveli-Tiruchandur (MG-62 Kms.)	4000	17910
83	Sagarajambaguru-Talaguppa (MG-16 Kms.)	1815	8877
84	Trichur-Guruvayur (BG-24 Kms.)*	284117	4843
85	Chitradurg-Rayadurg (BG-99 Kms.)*	917004	2108
	TOTAL	1243073	115353
<i>South Central Railway</i>			
86	Bhimavaram-Narasapur (BG-29 Kms.)	6759	8716
87	Gudivada-Machilipatnam (BG-40 Kms.)	2608	12238
88	Jankampet-Bodhan (MG-20 Kms.)	790	2396
89	Mudkhed-Adilabad (Mg-162 Kms.)	9389	23412
90	Adilabad-Pimpalkutti (Bg-20 Kms.)*	266998	18865
	TOTAL	286544	65627

S. No.	Name of the Branch line	Cost	Net Loss
<i>South Eastern Railway</i>			
91	Khurda Road-Puri (BG-43 Kms.)	49635	52798
92	Newpada-Gunupur (NG-90 Kms.)	737	20356
93	Purulia-Kotshila & Ranchi-Lohardaga (NG-104 Kms.)	8621	125334
94	Raipur-Dhamtari (NG-89 Kms.)	1946	65722
95	Satpura Railways (NG-1007 Kms.)	12954	759390
96	Rupsa-Talbandh (NG-89 Kms.)	2493	29106
97	Kanhan-Ramtek (BG-24 Kms.)	3062	17455
98	Bondamunda-Nawgaon-Pumapani (BG-29 Kms.)	21173	252
99	Jakhapura-Daitari (BG-33 Kms.)	97663	53926
100	Hatia-Nawgaon (BG-18 Kms.)	134458	39209
101	Bobli-Salur (BG-18 Kms.)	7235	7379
102	Tumsar Road-Tirodi (BG-24 Kms.)	4193	20210
103	Tata-Badampahar (BG-99.05 Kms.)	85796	17946
104	Tupkadih-Talgaria (BG-33 Kms.)*	222118	94187
105	Santragachi-Baragachia (BG-24 Kms.)*	321841	59711
	TOTAL	973925	1362981
<i>Western Railway</i>			
106	Billimora-Waghai (NG-63 Kms.)	3004	10092
107	Chhuchhapura-Tenkhal (NG-38 Kms.)	1820	821
108	Choranda-Motikoral (NG-19 Kms.)	894	1792
109	Samni-Dahej (NG-39 Kms.)	1881	2115
110	Broach-Jambusar-Kavi (NG-76 Kms.)	3648	3562
111	Chota Udaipur-Jambusar (NG-150 Kms.)	7203	7666
112	Chanded-Malsar (NG-87 Kms.)	4146	7533
113	Nadiad-Kapadvanj (NG-45 Kms.)	2139	2971
114	Nadiad-Bhadran (NG-58 Kms.)	2763	1606
115	Gandhidham-New Kandla (MG-12 Kms.)	7475	19281
116	Mawli Jn. Bari Sadri (MG-82 Kms.)	3991	63512
117	Pranchi Rd.-Kodinar (MG-26 Kms.)	1468	12206

S. No.	Name of the Branch line	Cost	Net Loss
118	Sihor-Palitana (MG-27 Kms.)	1568	7283
119	Rajula Jn.-Rajula City (MG-9 Kms.)	541	2155
120	Ranuj Netrana Rd.-Kakosi	3080	5125
121	Mehsana-Tarang Hill (MG-56 Kms.)	2358	8422
122	Himmatnagar-Khedbrahma (MG-55 Kms.)	1492	8698
123	Anand-Cambay (BG-51 Kms.)	2374	13221
124	Boriavi-Vadtal-Swaminarayn (BG-6 Kms.)	731	2563
125	Kota-Chittaurgarh-Neemuch (BG-222 Kms.)*	1563444	404
TOTAL		1816018	181028
GRAND TOTAL		8020628	3761485

*Figures for 1997-98.

[Translation]

Subsidy on Food Items

*277. SHRI RAJO SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of increase in grant of subsidy on food items during the last three years, item-wise;

(b) whether the Government are taking or propose to take concrete steps with a view to checking the constant increase in the above subsidy; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR) : (a) The amount of food subsidy released to FCI and to the other State Governments during the last three years was as follows:

(Rs. in crores)

Year (s)	Amount
1996-97	5166
1997-98	7500
1998-99	8700

(b) and (c) Following important steps have been/are being taken by the FCI to reduce/contain the handling costs with a view to checking the increase in subsidy:

(i) Making efforts to achieve average capacity utilisation of 75% to reduce storage cost even though the procurement of grain is seasonal.

(ii) Making efforts to adhere to procurement and movement ratio norm of 1:1.35 as fixed by the Government of India to reduce the expenditure on freight,

(iii) Making continuous efforts to reduce shortage in handling of foodgrains,

(iv) Making efforts to reduce the incurrence of Railway demurrage charges,

(v) Releasing stocks in the open market at prices above the Central Issue Price (CIP),

(vi) Controlling the administrative cost by following minimum recruitment of resultant entry level posts irrespective of the increased volume of operations,

(vii) Trying to have a look at the economic cost,

(viii) Efforts to reduce damages,

(ix) Efforts on to find out ways for focussing PDS on poorest of the poor.

Free Rail Passes

* 278. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL : SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria fixed for issuing Free Railway Passes to different categories;

(b) the number of Free Railway Passes issued during the last two years, category-wise;

(c) whether the Ministry has renewed Free Railway Passes issued during the last three years;

(d) if so, the names of persons and institutions whose passes have been renewed along with the reasons therefor;

(e) whether the Railways have decided to stop issuing all route first class free passes to social workers, institutions/journalists and other important persons from October 1999;

(f) if so, the reasons therefor;

(g) whether the Government are aware that the free passes issued earlier are being misused; and

(h) if so, the number of complaints received during the last two years in this regard and the details of action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE) : (a) Complimentary card passes are issued to different categories as per the schemes announced from time to time and also under the discretionary powers of the Minister of Railways.

(b) The number of complimentary free railway passes issued during the last two years category-wise are as follows:

Category	No. of passes issued during the last two years (from 1.1.98 to 30.11.1999)	
	1998	1999
I. Card Passes		
(1) Freedom Fighters. (cost borne by Ministry of Home Affairs)	32,500	25,454
(2) Arjuna Awardees/Olympic Medalists/ Asian & Commonwealth Gold Medalists/Dronacharya Awardees.	371	84
(3) Winners of Chakra series Gallantry Awards (Defence).	Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha	
(4) Winners of President's Police Medal For Gallantry & Police Medal for Gallantry (Police).	-do-	
(5) Presidents/Secretaries of National Sports Federations of India, Indian Olympic Association and State Olympic Associations affiliated to Indian Olympic Association	19	49
(6)-Non-official Members of Hindi Salahakar Samiti.	35	9
(7) Ex. MRs/MOS(R)s/DMRs.	1	6
(8) Eminent persons/Organisations engaged in social/cultural/educational/sports/welfare activities & others on medical grounds, etc. under the discretionary powers of Minister for Railways.	106	317
II. Cheque Passes (Complimentary single journey to and fro passes)		
(1) Licensed Porters	Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.	
(2) Individuals and organisations engaged in social, cultural, educational, sports and welfare activities under the discretionary powers of Minister for Railways, Minister of State for Railways & Railway Board, as per guidelines evolved by the Ministry of Railways.	1690	950

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The complimentary card passes in respect of categories (1) to (7) mentioned in part (b) of the reply are renewable after one/two years, except in the case of ex-MR/MOS(R)/DMR for whom Passes are issued for life time and no renewal is required. The complimentary card passes under the discretionary powers of Minister for Railways renewed during the last three years are shown in the enclosed Statement.

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) It has been decided to discontinue issue of fresh complimentary card passes under discretionary powers as an austerity measure.

(g) Yes, Sir.

(h) Five cases of misuse of free rail passes have been detected during the years 1998 and 1999 (upto November 1999). In one case the pass has been cancelled, and in the other cases the passes have been confiscated.

Statement

List of names of persons and institutions whose passes have been renewed during the last 3 years

Shri/Ms/Mrs.	Shri/Ms/Mrs.
1. K. Yadav Reddy	2. Nasib Pathan
3. Km. Champa Rao	4. Arvind Chaturvedi
5. A. K. Singh	6. One representative of Kanchi Kamakothi Peethadi Peeth
7. K. Birendra Pratap Singh	8. Tej Narain Yadav
9. Surendra Sharma	10. B. Chandrashekhar
11. V.V. Eswaran	12. 3 Members of SPIC MACAY
13. S. D. Arya	14. Mrs. K. Devi
15. Office bearer of L.B. Shastri Seva Niketan	16. Prem Nath Singh
17. Suresh Kumar	18. Mrs. Manjula Kaushik
19. Charan Lal Sahu	20. S. M. Asif
21. H. C. Bariwal	22. J. Prajapati
23. Afaque Ahmed Khan	24. Surymani Bhiogade
25. Pyarelal Saroj	26. Daulat Ram Jain

Shri/Ms/Mrs.	Shri/Ms/Mrs.	Shri/Ms/Mrs.	Shri/Ms/Mrs.
27. Swami Budhanandji Maharaj	28. M.S.D. Singh	89. Shatrujit Singh	90. B. B. Singh
29. Mrs. Kanchan & Shri K. Krishna	30. J. B. Raju	91. H. N. Sharma	92. Office-bearers of All India Urdu Writers and Journalists Forum for National Integration.
31. B. P. Mukherjee	32. Ishtiaq Ahmed	93. Pramod Tiwari	94. T. R. Ramkrishnan
33. Devi Das Gupta	34. Smt. Nirmala Bhagey	95. Dr. G. Muniratnam	96. Vijay Pal Singh Tomar
35. Govind Ram Chouhan	36. Rohitaswa Kumar	97. Sister Mary Mascarenhas	98. Vedacharya Ghaisas Gurji
37. S. K. Rungta	38. S. B. Pandey	99. Ms Prabhat Shobha Pandit	100. T. G. K. Menon
39. Ashok Singh	40. Swami Atmagyananandji	101. Rajendra Tiwari	102. Ajay Kumar Nishad
41. Mohd. Madani	42. Awadesh Kumar Singh	103. Smt. G. Sarala Kumari	104. N. I. Venkateswar
43. Smt. Shashi Singh Yadav	44. Vijay Pratap Singh	105. Sunder Lal Bahuguna	106. Dharmavatsal Das & Muni Vatsal Das
45. Ajit Kumar Singh	46. Smt. Santosh Bhardwaj	107. Iswar Chandra Das & Vishavavihari Das	108. Sister M. Nirmala, Missionary of Charity
47. Ram Ratan Singh	48. R. Dubey	109. Sant Vivek Das Acharya	110. Sanjay Kumar Singh
49. Arun Kumar Verma	50. Ms. Ratna Vohra	111. Kanchi Kamakothi Peethadipeth	112. H. H. Swami Narayan Nand Bharati
51. Mahadev Roy	52. Mukesh Kumar Patel	113. Moulana Fuzail Ahmed Quasmi	114. Hariom Jatiya
53. Hare Ram Guru	54. J. S. Dhal	115. B. Y. Parit	116. Ms Pramila Thakur
55. Smt. Laxi Devi	56. Dr. K. S. Hora	117. Ms. Sudha Varde	118. Ms Champa Limaya
57. Ms. Mamta Rani Singh	58. L. B. Choubey	119. Sunil Shastri	120. Man Mohan Choudhury
59. Smt. Jaimala Jain	60. G. M. Alhat	121. Ms. Deepa Kaul	122. Shams Ur Huda Shanis
61. Jagdish Arora	62. Sumesh Mishra	123. Smt. K. C. Ajmera	124. Arshadul Quadri
63. Girish Rastogi	64. S. P. Mishra	125. Dewar Syed Zainul Abedin	126. Rajiv Kumar
65. Manoj Saluja	66. Smt. Usha	127. Mukesh Chandra	128. Aboobacker Moulavi
67. Swami Harinarayan Nand	68. Sambha Pd. Singh	129. Faizul Arefeen Ghulam	130. R. S. Govai
69. J. G. Augad	70. Office bearer of R. K. Mission	131. Shahbzada Abdul Rahman	132. Ustad Bismillah Khan & Party
71. Sankar Suhel	72. Ghan Shyam Sharma	133. Choudhary Gangaram	134. Ms Sudha Pandey
73. Prasant Kumar Shahi	74. Atul Kumar Anjan	135. Barjesh Nigam	136. M. C. Bawal
75. Ashok Singh	76. Hamid Ali	137. S. K. Bandopadhyaya	138. Office-bearers of Indian Adult Education Association
77. B. V. Raman	78. Yogendra Khanduri	139. Sheikh Abu Baker	140. Shakeel Chandra
79. Mahasukhlal B. Kamdar	80. Dr. Nerella Venu Madhav		
81. M. W. Siddiqui	82. H. I. Siddiqui		
83. Mata Kalyani	84. Atul Trivedi		
85. Ch. Keerthi	86. K. Vikram Rao		
87. Moulana Jameel Ahmed Ilyasi	88. Swami Trigunanandaji		

Shri/Ms/Mrs.	Shri/Ms/Mrs.
141. M. M. Bahuguna	142. Zafar Iqbal
143. Madhukar Sighe	144. Justice R. K. Shukla
145. Chandmal Kumawat	146. Mithilesh Dwivedi
147. Fuzail Ahmed Qasi	148. Capt. Abbas Ali
149. Ms Manorama	150. D. Sunderani
151. Parmanand Pandey	152. Srinivas Giri Maharaj
153. Lalan Prasad Vyas	154. S. J. Anand
155. Three Members of SPIC MACAY	156. Three Members of SPIC MACAY
157. One representative of Kanchi Kamakothi Peethadi Peeth	158. One representative of Kanchi Kamakothi Peethadi Peeth
159. Dr. S. Kumar & two others (The Bharat Scouts & Guides)	160. L. M. Jain (The Bharat Scouts & Guides)
161. Two sisters of Missionaries of Charity	162. Two Brothers of Missionaries of Charity

[English]

Withdrawal of PDS Facility from urban areas

*279. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal is currently being considered by the Government to withdraw the facility of PDS from urban areas particularly metropolitan cities; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Committee on Welfare of Jawans

*280. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had constituted a Committee to evolve a national policy on welfare of jawans and ex-servicemen on a permanent and institutionalised basis;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the progress made by the Committee in this regard so far; and

(d) the time by which the Committee is likely to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) In the Chief Ministers' Conference held on 7th July, 1999 to discuss the Kargil situation and internal security scenario in the country, a suggestion was made to constitute a Committee to evolve a National Policy for the welfare of jawans and ex-Servicemen. Accordingly, a Committee was constituted under the Chairmanship of Raksha Mantri. The Finance Minister and the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Punjab and West Bengal are the members of the Committee.

The Committee has, so far, held two meetings. The Committee is yet to submit its report.

Jawahar Rozgar Yojana

2585. SHRI AKBOR ALI KHANDOKER : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the financial progress of West Bengal under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana was far below satisfactory level during the last three years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Union Government propose to issue fresh guidelines to those States whose financial performance under the Scheme have not been found satisfactory; and

(d) if not, the steps taken by the Government to achieve the objectives of the Scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA) : (a) and (b) The utilization of funds released to the State of West Bengal during the last three years by the Central Government under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana has not been satisfactory due to varying reasons at the implementation level. The availability of funds during 1996-97 to 1998-99 for implementation of JRY in the state and its utilization has been as given below:

(Rs. in lakhs)

Year	Total availability	Amt. utilised	% utilization
1996-97	18441.70	12837.59	69.61
1997-98	17260.69	12404.99	71.87
1998-99	18311.38	12372.19	67.57

(c) and (d) Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) has been streamlined, restructured and renamed as Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) w.e.f. 1.4.99. The Ministry has introduced an Area Officers Scheme under which Senior Officers of this Ministry are nominated as Area Officers for particular State (s). They are required to visit their allocated States at least once in a quarter and submit their Reports regarding the implementation of the various schemes including JGSY. Review meetings are also held with the State Secretaries in charge of Rural Development Departments to review the performance under various schemes. From July, 1999 a Performance Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development has been set up to review performance of the various Central sectors/Centrally sponsored schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development on a quarterly basis for monitoring the effective execution of the schemes/programmes. Works under JGSY are also monitored by the block, district and State level Monitoring and Vigilance Committees constituted for overseeing the various programmes of this Ministry. For effective implementation of the programme, physical monitoring through regular field inspections by officers dealing with JGSY at the State headquarters has been made mandatory. Provision has also been made in the programme guidelines for the Gram Sabha to appoint a Vigilance Committee for each village to oversee, supervise and monitor the implementation of each work under the programme. There is also provision for social audit of works under the Yojana by the Gram Sabha.

[Translation]

Jobs to Dependents of Deceased Employees of Rifle Factory

2586. DR. BALIRAM : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the dependents of the deceased employees of Rifle Factory Ichhapur (West Bengal) do not get job soon on compassionate grounds;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of dependents of deceased employees provided jobs by the factory during the last three years and the number of pending applications in this regard as on date; and

(d) the time by which all the pending applications are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK) : (a) to (d) The object of the scheme for compassionate appointment is to grant appointment on compassionate grounds to a dependent family member of a Government servant dying in harness or who is retired on medical grounds, thereby leaving his family in penury and without any means of livelihood, to

relieve the family of the Government servant concerned from financial destitution and to help it get over the emergency.

168 dependents of the deceased/medically boarded out employees of Rifle Factory Ichhapur have been granted compassionate appointment during the last three years keeping in view the object of the scheme and the guidelines issued by the Government in this regard.

All the 69 applications, which are pending at present, are under process. Their clearance will depend upon the response from the various agencies to which references have been made for verification of credentials of the candidates, financial status etc.

[English]

Compensation for Social Obligation

2587. SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE:

SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways had sought compensation from the Government to meet expenditure on social service obligation;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the response of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Indian Railways have been demanding compensation on the basis of social service obligation assessed by an Inter-Ministerial Working Group set up specifically to examine this issue in detail. The Working Group had estimated the social service obligation to be Rs. 886 crores for the year 1994-95 and recommended compensation to the Railways for bearing this burden. The figures worked out on the same methodology are Rs. 882 crores, Rs. 1065 crores and 1357 crores for the years 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98 respectively.

(c) The Ministry of Finance has expressed its inability to compensate Railways as recommended by the Working Group. However, the issue is being taken up further at an appropriate level.

Road Link to Leh and Ladakh

2588. SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is another route also to Leh and Ladakh from the district of Kullu and Lahol Spiti in Himachal Pradesh, besides Srinagar;

(b) whether the Ministry propose to construct a tunnel to connect Leh and Ladakh via Kullu and Lahol-spiti in Himachal Pradesh for security reasons and in view of terrorist activities in Srinagar and obstruction on the road owing to snowfall in winters;

- (c) if so, the schemes formulated in this regard; and
(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) It has been decided that the Ministry of Surface Transport is to initiate urgent action on the tunnel under Rohtang Pass. Investment decision is to be taken after the technical reports are examined by that Ministry.

- (c) Preliminary scheme involves construction of a 8.9 Km long tunnel.
(d) Does not arise.

Additional quota of Wheat and Rice to Maharashtra

2589. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government of India had agreed for supply of additional quota of wheat and rice to Maharashtra from October, 1998 onwards till now; and
(b) if so, the allocations made so far, month-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN) (a) and (b) Over and above their normal monthly allocations under Targeted Public Distribution System, a quantity of 20,000 tonnes of rice and 20,000 tonnes of wheat per month is being given to Maharashtra from October 1998 onwards as additional allocation at Central Issue Prices applicable for above poverty line (APL) families. A further additional allocation of 10,000 tonnes of argentine wheat was also given to Maharashtra at APL rate in November, 1998.

Abolition of Octroi and Toll Tax within Cantonment Areas

2590. SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a request from the Sesunderabad Cantonment Board to abolish octroi and toll tax within the cantonment limits has been received in June, 1999; and

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in according permission and the time by which the permission to abolish octroi and toll tax is likely to be given?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The proposal of the Board was received in July, 1999. The proposal was considered by Directorate General of Defence Estates which has requested for certain clarifications in the matter. The proposal will be considered further on receipt of the requisite clarifications.

Cases pending under Fora

2591. DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of cases pending in Consumer Courts in the country, State-wise;
(b) the number of districts where district Fora are not functioning; and
(c) the time limit set to dispose off these pending cases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) As per the information available, the state-wise number of cases pending for disposal in the state-commissions and district fora is given in the enclosed statement.

(b) As reported by the States & UTs, district fora are not functioning in 52 districts as at the end of September, 1999.

(c) According to the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 and the Rules framed thereunder, the National Commission, State Commissions and district fora set up under the Act are required to dispose off cases, as far as possible, within 90 days from the date of receipt of the Notice by the opposite party and within 150 days if it requires analysis or testing of the commodity in question.

Statement

S. No.	STATE/UT	Cases pending in the State Commissions	Cases pending in the District Fora
1	2	3	4
1.	A & N Island	5	17
2.	Andhra Pradesh	2096	20593
3.	Arunachal Pradesh	6	31
4.	Assam	683	1043

1	2	3	4
5. Bihar		3194	13469
6. Chandigarh Admn.		197	4080
7. D&N Haveli		0	9
8. Daman & Diu		1	34
9. Delhi		3728	17951
10. Goa		91	600
11. Gujarat		2764	18553
12. Haryana		2517	15410
13. Himachal Pradesh		107	1956
14. Jammu & Kashmir		622	2189
15. Karnataka		2496	7245
16. Kerala		887	5828
17. Lakshadweep		0	5
18. Madhya Pradesh		2677	8733
19. Maharashtra		5684	19708
20. Manipur		3	55
21. Meghalaya		27	39
22. Mizoram		12	228
23. Nagaland		0	4
24. Orissa		3449	1902
25. Pondicherry		70	58
26. Punjab		1666	3059
27. Rajasthan		11924	16232
28. Sikkim		0	9
29. Tamil Nadu		2237	6795
30. Tripura		57	171
31. Uttar Pradesh		17841	59988
32. West Bengal		1363	5056
Total:		66404	231050

[Translation]

Posts of Director, Finance

2592. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of posts of Director Finance and other Directors lying vacant in the Ministry and its Public Sector Undertakings;

(b) the time by which these posts are likely to be filled up; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) to (c) The post of Director (Finance) is presently vacant in Air India. The posts of Director (Engineering), Director (CW&P), Director (Corporate Affairs) and Director (Inflight Service) are also vacant in Air India. These posts will be filled after completion of the recruitment process.

[English]

ITDC Projects

2593. SHRI ANNASHEB M.K.PATIL : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether India Tourism Development Corporation has launched several new projects in joint sector in the country and abroad, with a view to expand its network;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether India Tourism Development Corporation is providing technical help and expertise to set up new hotels; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARTI) : (a) and (b) India Tourism Development Corporation Limited has set up 7 Joint Ventures with the State Governments/State Tourism Development Corporations which includes the latest Joint Venture, namely, Punjab Ashok Hotel Corporation Ltd. at Anandpur Sahib jointly set up with the Punjab Tourism Development Corporation Ltd. in November, 1998.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. ITDC is offering its consultancy services on commercial basis from concept to commissioning of hotel projects. These services mainly include preparation of techno economic feasibility report, technical services during construction and management advisory services during operation of the hotel.

[Translation]

Air Services from Katihar District

2594. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether an airport has been built on the Southern end of Katihar city;

(b) if so, whether the Government are contemplating to start air services from this airport; and

(c) if so, the time by which air services are likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) There is an abandoned airstrip at Katihar which is owned by the State Government of Bihar.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Boards of Directors of Air India and Indian Airlines

2595. SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Boards of Directors of Indian Airlines and Air India have been reconstituted;

(b) if so, the names of the members included therein; and

(c) if not, the time by which these boards are likely to be reconstituted?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) Government has re-constituted the Boards of Air India Limited and Indian Airlines Limited as under:

Air India Limited

1. Shri Ravindra Gupta, Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation Part-time Chairman.
2. Shri M. P. Mascarenhas, Managing Director, Air India Limited.
3. Shri Anil Bajjal, Chairman & Managing Director, Indian Airlines Limited.
4. Shri P. K. Brahma, Joint Secretary & Financial Advisor, Ministry of Civil Aviation.

(Shri P. K. Brahma has since completed his tenure as Joint Secretary and FA in the Ministry of Civil Aviation)

5. Shri D. V. Gupta, Chairman, Airports Authority of India.
6. Chairman, ICICI.

Indian Airlines Limited

1. Shri Anil Bajjal, Chairman & Managing Director.
2. Shri M. P. Mascarenhas, Managing Director, Air India Limited.
3. Shri A. P. Singh, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation.

(Shri A. P. Singh has since relinquished charge as Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation).

4. Shri P. K. Brahma, Joint Secretary, and Financial Advisor, Ministry of Civil Aviation.

(Shri P.K. Brahma has since completed his tenure as Joint Secretary and FA in the Ministry of Civil Aviation).

5. Shri D. V. Gupta, Chairman, Airports Authority of India.
6. Chairman, IDBI.

It has also been decided to appoint four Functional Directors and five Non-Official Directors each in the two Boards.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Assistance for strengthening of Consumer Courts

2596. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Maharashtra have requested to provide financial assistance for strengthening the infrastructure of the consumer courts set up under the Consumer Protection Act, 1986; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Union Government in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. To supplement Maharashtra Government's efforts the Central Government has released a financial assistance of Rs. 3.6 crores under one-time grant scheme to strengthen the infrastructure of one State Commission and 31 district fora which were functioning in Maharashtra at the time of approval of the Scheme by the Planning Commission. The request of the Maharashtra Government for additional financial assistance of Rs. 3.0 crores could not be acceded to as the Central Government has no Scheme, as of now, to extend further support to the States and Uts. for strengthening the infrastructure of Consumer Courts.

Survey for Kovvur-Bhadrachalam Road Railway Line

2597. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposed to undertake a survey for new railway line between Kovvur and Bhadrachalam road;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be undertaken; and

(c) the amount allocated for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An updating of a survey for a new line from Kovvur to Bhadrachalam Road has been included in the Budget, 1999-2000, which has since been taken up. Further consideration of the project will be possible once the results of the survey become available.

(c) Token outlay has been provided this year. Funds as required, for progressing the survey would be provided by reappropriation.

Bad State of Station Road in Delhi Cantt.

2598. SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the bad state of the road named 'station road' in Delhi Cantonment from Dhaula Kuan to Delhi Cantt. Railway Station;

(b) if so, the reason as to why the Delhi Cantonment Board has not been maintaining the road well;

(c) whether the Government propose to enquire into the use of sub-standard material in the construction of the road and fix responsibility; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) The road is under the management of Military Engineering Service (MES) and not the Delhi Cantonment Board. MES has not been able to maintain the road well due to inadequate provision of funds.

(c) and (d) There is no complaint of any substandard material having been used in this road. The road was constructed in 1946 and strengthened in 1987-88. The bad state of the road is due to the high intensity of traffic on it.

Renewable Energy Projects

2599. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBHA MANDLIK : Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of renewable energy projects under implementation in different States particularly in Maharashtra as on date;

(b) whether any such proposals are pending with the Union Government for clearance;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(d) the time by which these proposals are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) The Government has been implementing a wide range of programmes/projects in the non-conventional energy sector, such as Biogas Plans, Improved Chulha, Biomass Gasification, Briquetting Plants, Solar Thermal Water Heating (both domestic & industrial), Solar Photovoltaic, Home Lighting/lanterns/village level power, grid connected power from Wind Energy, Small Hydro, Biomass Combustion and Bagasse based cogeneration power, throughout the country including the state of Maharashtra.

(b) to (d) The Administrative Approvals/financial sanctions/fund release are part of an on-going and continuous activity of the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources. These are all being processed expeditiously.

Submission Projects

2600. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have approved of 58 Submission Projects at a cost of Rs. 612.42 crores;

(b) if so, whether the Government have released amount of Rs. 217.90 crores by March 31, 1998;

(c) if so, whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh sought release of the balance of 106.88 crores; and

(d) if so, the reasons for not releasing this amount?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA) :

(a) The Government of India has approved 58 Sub-Mission projects for Andhra Pradesh at an approved cost of Rs. 571.02 crore, out of which the Government of India share is Rs. 428.07 crore.

(b) An amount of Rs. 216.51 crore has been released to the Government of Andhra Pradesh between 1993-94 and 1997-98 (upto 31.3.98) under Sub-Mission programme.

(c) The Government of Andhra Pradesh requested for a release of Rs. 210.18 crore in November 1998. Again, the State Government requested for release of Rs. 104.21 crore in January 1999. The State Government again requested for release of Rs. 67.59 crore in October 1999.

(d) An amount of Rs. 110.46 crore has been released to the Government of Andhra Pradesh during 1998-99 and Rs. 32.47 crore during 1999-2000 (upto 15.12.99). Funds are released to the State Governments under Sub-Mission

subject to providing of requisite documents like Utilisation certificate/AG Certificate, completion certificate and statement of expenditure etc. Further releases to the Government of Andhra Pradesh depend upon the progress of projects and receipt of requisite documents from the State Government.

Metre Gauge Rail Project in Andaman Nicobar

2601. SHRI I BISHNU PADA RAY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal for construction of metre gauge railway line from Port Bihar to Diglipur; and

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. A survey for construction of new Broad Gauge line from Port Blair to Diglipur was conducted. The survey report revealed that cost of 250 km. line would be Rs. 793.77 cr. with a negative rate of return. Due to the unremunerative nature of the project and acute constraint of resources it has not been found possible to take up the project for the present.

Dispose of Press Mud and Bagasse

2602. SHRI AJOY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of Press Mud and bagasse that has been generated during the last three years, State-wise and year-wise; and

(b) the methods adopted to use/dispose of the bagasse and Press Mud?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) and (b) The data on quantity of press mud and bagasse produced by the sugar factories are not maintained. However, it is mentioned that the press mud constitutes about 3% to 5% of cane crushed and is mostly used as a manure by the farmers while the bagasse is about 33% of the total cane crushed and is mostly utilised as a fuel for generation of steam required for various process operations of the sugar factory. About 5% to 6% of the bagasse on cane is saved in a normal factory which is sold to paper, particle board, sugar factories generating power during off-season etc.

Tracing of Fractures in Tracks in Vijayawada Division

2603. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any steps have been taken to conduct an intensive survey to trace out the fractures in tracks in Vijayawada division; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes Sir. Intensive steps are being taken all over the Indian Railways.

(b) The details are as under :

(i) Ultrasonic flaw detection (USFD) testing of rails and weld is being done regularly to detect flaws in the track.

(ii) A foot by foot inspection of track is carried out daily by key man to detect fractures of rails/welds.

(iii) During winter when the rail temperature falls below the prescribed value, cold weather patrolling is carried out to detect rail/weld fracture in the track.

Formation of Regiments In Army

2604. SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received a number of requests from the Government of Andhra Pradesh and some Members of Parliament for formation of Andhra Regiment;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the criteria being followed for raising new regiments?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The policy of the Government is not to raise any new regiment on the basis of a particular class, creed, community, religion or region, but to have an Army in which all Indians have representation.

Opening of Army Recruitment Offices and Sainik Schools

2605. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Army Recruitment offices and Sainik Schools functioning in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether the Government propose to open some army recruitment offices and sainik schools in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the time by which these are likely to be opened; and

(d) the criteria/modalities adopted for opening new Army Recruitment Offices and Sainik Schools, separately?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) A list of Army Recruitment offices and Sainik Schools is given in the enclosed Statement.

(b) to (d) With the introduction of the new recruitment policy with effect from 1st April 1998, all recruitments are made through open rallies and the role of the recruiting offices is limited to planning and administrative activities. As such there is no proposal under consideration of the Government to open new recruitment offices.

Sainik Schools are opened normally on the request of State Governments as the expenditure on land, building and other infrastructure required for setting up of a Sainik School, are borne by the State Government. At present there is no proposal from any State Government which conforms to these guidelines.

Statement

Army Recruiting Offices

Sl. No.	Name of the Zonal Recruiting Office (ZRO)/ Branch Recruiting Office (BRO)	State
1	2	3
01	BRO Vishakhapatnam	Andhra Pradesh
02	BRO Secunderabad	-do-
03	BRO Guntur	-do-
04	BRO Silchar	Assam
05	BRO Jorhat	-do-
06	BRO Narangi	-do-
07	BRO Katihar	Bihar
08	ZRO Danapur	-do-
09	BRO Gaya	-do-
10	BRO Muzzafarpur	-do-
11	BRO Ranchi	-do-
12	IRO Delhi	Delhi
13	BRO Jamnagar	Gujarat
14	BRO Ahmedabad	-do-
15	ZRO Ambala	Haryana
16	BRO Charkhi Dadri	-do-
17	BRO Rohtak	-do-

1	2	3
18	BRO Hissar	Haryana
19	BRO Hamirpur	Himachal Pradesh
20	BRO Palampur	-do-
21	BRO Mandi	-do-
22	BRO Simla	-do-
23	BRO Jammu	Jammu & Kashmir
24	BRO Srinagar	-do-
25	ZRO Bangalore	Karnataka
26	BRO Mangalore	-do-
27	BRO Belgaum	-do-
28	BRO Calicut	Kerala
29	BRO Trivendrum	-do-
30	ZRO Pune	Maharashtra
31	BRO Aurangabad	-do-
32	BRO Mumbai	-do-
33	BRO Kolhapur	-do-
34	BRO Nagpur	-do-
35	ZRO Jabalpur	Madhya Pradesh
36	BRO Bhopal	-do-
37	BRO Gwalior	-do-
38	BRO Mhow	-do-
39	BRO Raipur	-do-
40	ZRO Shillong	Meghalaya
41	BRO Rangapahar	Nagaland
42	BRO Berhampore	Orissa
43	BRO Cuttack	-do-
44	BRO Sambalpur	-do-
45	ZRO Jalandhar	Punjab
46	BRO Amritsar	-do-
47	BRO Ferozpur	-do-
48	BRO Ludhiana	-do-
49	BRO Patiala	-do-

1	2	3
50	ZRO Jaipur	Rajasthan
51	BRO Jodhpur	-do-
52	BRO Alwar	-do-
53	BRO Jhunjhunu	-do-
54	BRO Kota	-do-
55	ZRO Chennai	Tamilnadu
56	BRO Coimbatore	-do-
57	BRO Trichy	-do-
58	ZRO Lucknow	Uttar Pradesh
59	BRO Agra	-do-
60	BRO Almora	-do-
61	BRO Amethi	-do-
62	BRO Bareilly	-do-
63	BRO Lansdowne	-do-
64	BRO Pithoragarh	-do-
65	BRO Meerut	-do-
66	BRO Varanasi	-do-
67	ZRO/GRD Kunraghat	-do-
68	ZRO Calcutta	West Bengal
69	BRO Siliguri	-do-
70	BRO Kachrapara	-do-
71	BRO/GRD Ghoom	-do-

Some recruitment is also carried out by certain Regimental Training Centres exclusively for their own regiment/corps.

Sainik Schools

Sl.No.	Name of the School	State
1	2	3
1	Korukonda	Andhra Pradesh
2	Goalpara	Assam
3	Tilaiya	Bihar
4	Balachadi	Gujarat
5	Kunjpura	Haryana

1	2	3
6	Sujanpur Tira	Himachal Pradesh
7	Nagrota	Jammu & Kashmir
8	Bijapur	Karnataka
9	Kazhakootam	Kerala
10	Satara	Maharashtra
11	Rewa	Madhya Pradesh
12	Imphal	Manipur
13	Bhubaneswar	Orissa
14	Kapurthala	Punjab
15	Chittorgarh	Rajasthan
16	Amaravathinagar	Tamil Nadu
17	Ghorakhal	Uttar Pradesh
18	Purulia	West Bengal

Audit of Tourist Offices Abroad

2606. SHRI N.R.K. REDDY:
SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether any audit of Tourist Offices in abroad is conducted;

(b) whether the audit of Argentina Tourist Office was conducted; and

(c) if not, the time by which it is proposed to be audited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARTI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government of India Tourist Office in Buenos Aires, Argentina, was opened in 1998 only and its audit is not yet due.

[Translation]

Communication Facilities to Army

2607. DR. ASHOK PATEL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether success is not being achieved fully in Jammu-Kashmir to check terrorist activities as communication equipments available with extremists are highly sophisticated; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to see that advanced communication facilities are provided to the military to ensure control over terrorists?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) Militants in Jammu-Kashmir are using sophisticated communication systems which are available off the shelf in the world markets. Necessary measures by way of appropriate Surveillance Receivers, Jammers and Direction Finding equipment to prevent effective usage of communication facilities possessed by militants have been taken.

Housing Scheme for Kargil Martyrs

2608. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:
DR. ASHOK PATEL:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a special housing scheme is proposed to be introduced for the Kargil martyrs under the Air Force and Navy Housing Scheme;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the scheme is likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Expansion of Civil Aviation facilities in Bihar

2609. SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are any projects for the expansion of civil aviation facilities in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the amount earmarked alongwith the target date for the completion of each project?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) to (c) Airports Authority of India has completed expansion of the terminal building at Patna airport at an estimated cost of Rs. 10.30 crores.

[English]

Pending Railway Projects in Uttar Pradesh

2610. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of Railway Projects relating to Uttar Pradesh are still pending;

(b) the reason for delay in starting these projects; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (c) The Railway projects included in the budget on which work has not yet been taken up are:

1. Etawah-Mainpuri : New Line
2. Gonda-Bahraich as the first phase of Gonda-Sitapur-Lucknow : Gauge Conversion
3. Gonda-Gorakhpur Loop including Anandnagar-Nautanwa : Gauge Conversion
4. Part of Kaptanganj-Thave-Siwan-Chapra : Gauge Conversion
5. Mughalsarai-Zafrabad : Electrification
6. Gorakhpur-Sahjanwa : Doubling
7. Khurja-Meerut-Saharanpur : Electrification

Reasons for delay in starting and the steps proposed to be taken by the Government are as follows:

Recommendations of the Expanded Board of Railways have been obtained for the project at S. No. 1, while for projects at S. Nos. 2, 3, 4 & 5 recommendations of the Expanded Board of Railways are being obtained. All these projects are being processed for seeking necessary approvals. Work on these projects will start thereafter.

The projects at S. Nos. 6 and 7 have not yet been considered due to paucity of resources, and their relatively low priority.

Construction of Hassan-Bangalore Rail Line

2611. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether acquisition of land for construction of Hassan-Bangalore railway line has been completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the year in which the work started for construction of above line alongwith funds allocated and expenditure incurred thereon so far; and

(d) the time by which this work is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) The acquisition of land for Hassan-Bangalore new line project is in progress. The total length of the project is 166.70 km. Out

of which land has been acquired for 40 km. between Hassan and Shravanabelagola and 16 km. between Bangalore and Nelamangala.

(c) The work was included in the budget for the year 1996-97. Till 31.3.99, total funds allocated and expenditure incurred for this work are Rs. 3562.03 lakhs. During current year 1999-2000 an amount of Rs. 1000 lakhs has been allocated for this work. Actual expenditure during current year will be known when accounts are finalised.

(d) The completion of this project will depend on the availability of resources in the coming years.

Private Airlines engaged in Domestic/International Flights

2612. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the private airlines that are now operating in India on domestic and international flights;

(b) whether there is any plan to introduce more private airlines on domestic and international sectors; and

(c) if so, the details thereof airline-wise?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) At present M/s Jet Airways and M/s Sahara India Airlines are two domestic private airlines operating domestic flights and M/s Lufthansa Cargo India is operating cargo air services on international routes.

(b) and (c) Under the existing guidelines there is no bar as such for interested parties to submit proposals for consideration of the Government for operation of air transport services on domestic sectors and air cargo services on international sectors.

[Translation]

Expansion of Air strips in Himachal Pradesh

2613. SHRI SURESH CHANDEL:
COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for the expansion of air strips at Bhunter, Shimla and Gaggal in Himachal Pradesh to enable the easy movement of big planes and to encourage the tourism in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) to (c) The Airports Authority of India have planned to extend the runway by 600 ft. at Gaggal (Kangra) airport to make it suitable for 50 seater aircraft. It is not technically feasible to extend the runways at Bhunter and Shimla due to topographical conditions.

[English]

Introduction of direct train between Bangalore-Vasco-Bangalore

2614. SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce any train service between Bangalore-Vasco-Bangalore; and

(b) if so, the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) Vasco-Londa section has been opened recently for running of passenger trains. Introduction of additional trains including a train between Vasco and Bangalore will be examined after the new system of operation on the Castlerock-Kulem section stabilizes.

[Translation]

Construction of Road over Bridges in Uttar Pradesh

2615. SHRI AMIR ALAM:
SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of proposals sent by the Government of Uttar Pradesh regarding construction of road over bridges;

(b) the steps taken by the Government thereon;

(c) the present status of under construction road over bridges in Uttar Pradesh; and

(d) the time by which the construction of these road over bridges are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b)

S. No.	Details of proposals	Steps taken by Government
1	Road Over Bridge near Rampur on Muradabad-Lucknow section in lieu of Level crossing No. 403-A	Work has already been approved by Railways
2	Road Over Bridge at Kanpur-Anwarganj at Km. 4/6-7 in lieu of Level crossing No. 6	-do-
3	Road Over Bridge at Rampur on NH-24 in lieu of Level crossing No. 1 Spl.	-do-
4	Road Over Bridge Badshahnagar-Malhaur at Km. 767/6-7 in lieu of Level crossing No. 3 ML	-do-
5	Road Over Bridge at Daliganj-Mohibullapur at Km. 7/15-16 in lieu of Level crossing No. 6	-do-
6	Road Over Bridge at Daliganj-Badshahnagar at Km. 772/15-16 in lieu of Level crossing No. 7 ML	-do-
7	Road Over Bridge at Mohibullapur-Station Yard at Km. 11/5-6 in lieu of Level crossing No. 10	-do-
8	Road Over Bridge at Deoria Sadar-Noonkhar at Km. 445/3-4 in lieu of Level crossing No. 129-A	-do-
9	Road Over Bridge at Nazibabad at Km. 1498/13-14 in lieu of Level crossing No. 484-B on Bareilly-Muradabad section	The work was approved in Railways works Programme of 1989-90 but State Govt. did not allot funds, hence, the work was deteted. State Govt.'s response and estimate for approaches is still awaited.
10	Road Over Bridge at Jajua at Km. 1321/2-4 in lieu of Level crossing No. 478-A	Yet to be approved. State Govt. has been asked to furnish commitment of funds, execution of draft agreement and also to approve the General Arrangement Drawing (GAD)
11	Road Over Bridge at Orai at Km. 1240/13-14 in lieu of Level crossing No. 182-B	Yet to be approved. State Govt. (PWD) has been asked to fulfil preliminary pre-requisites required under extant rules.
12	Road Over Bridge near Hapur at Km. 105/8-9 and 64/10-11 in lieu of existing Level crossing No. 74 Spl on Ghaziabad-Muradabad section and in lieu of Level crossing No. 41 Spl on Hapur-Meerut section.	Yet to be approved. Revised abstract estimate for Railways portion of work has been sent to U.P. PWD for acceptance and revised estimate for approaches has been called for from them.
13	Road Over Bridge at Aurihar—Chhapara at Km. 129/4-5 in lieu of Level crossing No. 24-A	Yet to be approved. Proposal under scrutiny.
14	Road Over Bridge at Varanasi-Allahabad at Km. 208/4-5 in lieu of Level crossing No. 3-A	Yet to be approved. State Govt. has been asked to fulfil preliminary pre-requisites.

(c) and (d)

S. No.	Road Over Bridges under construction with present status	Time by which likely to be completed
1	2	3
1	Road Over Bridge at Iradatganj in lieu of Level crossing No. 430-A at Km. 1341/10-12 on Jabalpur-Allahabad section is in progress. General Arrangement Drawing has been finalized and Detailed Estimate is under preparation.	December 2001 provided funds are available.

1	2	3
2	Road Over Bridge between Sultanpur and Zaffarabad in lieu of Level crossing No.34-B. Work is in progress, both piers have been cast, casting of bottom slab and walls of girders have been completed. 90% work on approaches has also been completed.	March-2000
3	Road Over Bridge at Suberdarganj in lieu of Level crossing No. 12 Spl. Railway portion has been completed and work on approaches is in progress.	Dec. 2000
4	Road Over Bridge at Bilraya-Panwari in lieu of Level crossing No. 279-B/3. Railway's portion of the work has been completed and approaches are in progress.	March-2000
5	Road Over Bridge at Partapur in lieu of Level crossing No. 21-A. Sub-structure work has been completed. Three out of Six beams have been cast.	March-2000
6	Road Over Bridge at Ramghat, Aligarh in lieu of Level crossing No. 109-A. Profile sketch has been approved and detailed revised estimate has been sanctioned. Work is in progress alongwith approaches.	March-2000
7	Road Over Bridge at Sakoti in lieu of Level crossing No. 40-B. Profile sketch has been approved, GA plan under preparation and tenders have been invited.	Dec.-2000
8	Road Under Bridge at Itawa in lieu of Level crossing No. 89. Railway's portion of work has been completed and approaches are in progress.	March-2000
9	Road Over Bridge at Hatrash Road in lieu of Level crossing No. 95-A. Detailed Estimate has been sanctioned, profile sketch has been approved and tenders for Railway's portion are under finalization.	Target has not been fixed.
10	Road Under Bridge at Ghaziabad in lieu of Level crossing No. 154/C. Railway's portion has been completed.	March-2000
11	Road Over Bridge near Kanpur in lieu of Level crossing No. 79-D on GT Road. Detailed Estimate has been sanctioned and profile sketch has been approved. State Government yet to start work on approaches.	Target has not been fixed.
12	Road Over Bridge near Meja Road in lieu of Level crossing No.25-B/ 3T. Estimate under sanction and profile sketch is under approval.	Target has not be fixed
13	Road Over Bridge at Chaupala in lieu of Level crossing No. 356 Spl & 250-A. PWD yet to furnish estimate for their portion of work. Profile sketch under approval. As State Government reconsidering location of the bridge.	-do-
14	Road Over Bridge near Rampur in lieu of Level crossing No.403-A. Detailed estimate is under preparation and profile sketch is under approval.	-do-
15	Road Over Bridge near Barabanki in lieu of Level crossing No. 180-A. Plan is under preparation, PWD is yet to furnish estimate for approaches.	-do-
16	Road Over Bridge at Fatehpur in lieu of Level crossing No.50-C. Plan and estimate under preparation.	-do-
17	Road Over Bridge near Eye-Hospital, Kanpur in lieu of Level crossing No. 6. General Arrangement Drawing has been finalised, estimate being processed for sanction.	-do-
18	Road Over Bridge at Rampur on NH-24 in lieu of Level crossing No.1 spl. Revised General Arrangement Drawing is being prepared according to the observations of MOST.	-do-
19	Road Over Bridge between Badshahnagar & Malhaur in lieu of Level crossing No. 3 ML. 95% work on Railways portion and 85% on approaches.	March-2000

1	2	3
20	Road Over Bridge at Lucknow between Daliganj and Mohibullapur in lieu of Level crossing No.6. State Government has not yet decided the location.	Target not fixed
21	Road Over Bridge at Lucknow between Daliganj and Badshahnagar in lieu of Level crossing No. 7 ML. General Arrangement Drawing has been finalised. Detailed Estimate for Railway's portion furnished to State Government for acceptance. State Government yet to remove dwellings and shoppings falling between the alignment.	-do-
22	Road Over Bridge at Lucknow in Mohibullapur station yard in lieu of Level crossing No. 10. General Arrangement Drawing has been finalised. State Government yet to take up the approval of MOST.	-do-
23	Road Over Bridge between Deoria Sadar and Noonkhar in lieu of Level crossing No. 129. State Government has not yet decided the location.	-do-

Revenue collected through Passenger and Freight Traffic

2616. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT:
SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for passenger and freight traffic during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 and achievement made in this regard;

(b) the reasons for shortfall, if any;

(c) the steps taken to boost the freight traffic to meet the shortfall;

(d) the revenue collected by Railways through passengers and freight traffic during above period, zone-wise;

(e) the liability of the railways during above period;

(f) whether the liability was more than the revenue generated;

(g) if so, whether the Government are considering to take some new measures for generating more revenue in order to bridge this gap; and

(h) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) A Statement showing the targets and achievement during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 is given in enclosed Statement-I.

(b) The shortfall in traffic in 1998-99 was on account of less offer of freight traffic from core sectors of the economy. In the current year the shortfall is minor.

(c) During 1998-99 Ministry of Railways maintained continuous liaison with the rail user organizations as well as the concerned Ministries/Departments for maximizing movement of traffic by rail. A special volume discount scheme was also introduced for commodities like Iron & Steel, Cement, Iron Ore, Clinker and Sponge Iron. Power was also delegated to the General Managers to quote reduced station-to-station rates in order to make the rail traffic competitive. The shortfall in traffic by rail was however due to overall slowdown of the economy.

All efforts are being made to achieve the targets of the current year.

(d) Zone-wise information in regard to revenue collected by Railways through passenger and freight traffic for the year 1998-99 and 1999-2000 is given in enclosed Statement-II.

(e) The total liability of the Railways is met from their own revenue receipts, through capital from the General Exchequer for capital projects and market borrowings to fund rolling stock purchases (partly). The extent to liabilities met from Railways' own revenues are Rs. 32,810 crore in 1998-99 and Rs. 35,349 crore according to the Budget Estimate for 1999-2000.

(f) Yes, Sir. The difference was met largely from the balances in the Railway funds.

(g) and (h) Railway freight traffic is a derived demand arising out of the requirements of different core sectors of the economy. Consequent to number of step taken by the government to promote industrial growth, demand for rail

transport from different sectors has shown improvement during 1999-2000. Besides this, aggressive marketing strategies have been adopted by railways to boost up freight loading in order to maximize freight revenues. The scheme of volume discount has been further extended for the year 1999-2000.

On the passenger side, the following steps have been taken:

- (i) Loads of selected popular long distance trains have been augmented to 24 coaches.
- (ii) Special trains are run to clear the extra rush as and when required, and loads of popular trains are also augmented as and when required.
- (iii) Timings of trains are reviewed to provide the optimum quality of service to all streams of passenger traffic.
- (iv) Tatkal scheme has been introduced on selected trains for passengers who have to plan their journeys at short notice.
- (v) Provision of better customer friendly measures like Tele Booking and handling of complaints through computers and National Train Enquiry System.

The Railways have also initiated action to mobilize resources through exploitation of railway land and air space, leasing of right of way for optic fibre cable communication, leasing of advertising rights at railway stations and on the rolling stock, etc.

Statement I

Targets fixed for Passenger and Freight traffic during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 (up to October, 1999) and achievements made are as under :

Passenger Traffic

	1998-1999		1999-2000		
	Target (B.E.)	Actual	Target (B.E.)	Proportion-ate Target Upto Oct.99	Actual Upto Oct.99
Originating Passengers (in millions)	4531	4411	4984	—	2642
Passenger Earnings (Rs. in crore)	8368	8550	9449	5384	5345

Freight Traffic

	1998-1999		1999-2000		
	Target (B.E.)	Actual	Target (B.E.)	Proportion-ate Target Upto Oct.99	Actual Upto Oct.99
Originating Loading (Million tonnes)	450	421	450	252.90	252.64
Freight Earnings (Rs. in crore)	21686	19960	22341	12514	12468

Statement II

Zone-wise information in regard to revenue collected by railways through passenger and freight traffic for the year 1998-99 and 1999-2000 is as under :

(Rs. in crore)

Railways	1998-99		1999-2000 Upto October, 1999	
	Passenger	Goods	Passenger	Goods
Central	1733.77	2939.10	1057.82	1806.85
Eastern	843.00	2336.69	524.41	1476.26
Northern	1653.94	3304.76	1085.25	2286.39
North Eastern	511.97	390.99	316.06	218.54
Northeast-Frontier	167.55	375.93	104.00	219.39
Southern	843.20	1092.58	523.67	673.49
South Central	760.42	2066.42	494.47	1256.87
South Eastern	557.72	4698.79	326.40	2949.29
Western	1455.17	2755.13	899.20	1581.34
Metro	23.22	—	13.86	—
Total	8549.96	19960.39	5345.14	12468.42

[English]

Bid for Howitzers by Bofors

2617. SHRI T.M. SELVAGANPATHI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Swedish arms manufacturer, Bofors is bidding for an order of 400 Howitzer Cannon Guns for India;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Indian Government thereon;

(c) whether the Bofors propose to ship a Howitzer to India for Comprehensive testing at the artillery school in Deolalai next year; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) M/s Celsius of Sweden have offered to field for trials a 155 mm gun mounted on a vehicle on "no cost no commitment" basis. A decision has not been taken in this regard.

Survey for New Railway Lines

2618. SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the surveys proposed in the Railway Budget during each of the last three years and current year;

(b) the details of the surveys which have been conducted and taken by the Railways;

(c) the details of the surveys which are presently being conducted;

(d) whether any survey proposed in the Railway Budget was dropped; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

Funds utilised under Wasteland Development Programme

2619. DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the funds allocated under the Wasteland Development Programme to the State Governments have been utilised in full;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) to (c) The Department of Land Resources is implementing an Integrated Wastelands Development Project (IWDP) Scheme for the development of non-forest wastelands on watershed basis. Under this scheme, no allocation of funds are made but projects are sanctioned on project to project basis and funds are released to District Rural Development

Agencies/Zilla Parishads for implementation of projects. The Integrated Wastelands Development projects are implemented over a period of 4 to 5 years and the actual assessment of utilisation of funds can be known on completion of the projects. However, a statement showing State-wise funds released by this Department under the aforesaid Scheme during the first two years of the Ninth Plan period is given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Statement showing state-wise fund released under IWDP Scheme during the first two years of IXth Plan period

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	State/UT	Release 1997-98	Release 1998-99	Total Release (97-98 & 98-99)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	1075.31	981.21	2056.52
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	—	9.00	9.00
3.	Assam	36.78	24.52	61.30
4.	CAPART	250.00	—	250.00
5.	Gujarat	306.77	546.17	852.94
6.	Haryana	112.06	90.52	202.58
7.	Himachal Pradesh	311.51	188.42	499.93
8.	Jammu & Kashmir	99.96	136.40	236.36
9.	Karnataka	434.33	513.41	947.74
10.	Kerala	40.32	78.55	118.87
11.	Maharashtra	69.96	242.53	312.49
12.	Manipur	135.10	285.52	420.62
13.	Madhya Pradesh	213.97	258.63	472.60
14.	Nagaland	120.00	465.81	585.81
15.	Orissa	353.71	263.19	616.90
16.	Punjab	—	6.60	6.60
17.	Rajasthan	416.16	292.55	708.71
18.	Sikkim	194.32	176.10	370.42
19.	Tamil Nadu	282.07	176.26	458.33
20.	Tripura	70.00	—	70.00
21.	Uttar Pradesh	863.67	1464.51	2328.18
Total		5386.00	6199.90	11585.90

*[Translation]***Development of Buddhist Places with the help of Japan**

2620. YOGI ADITYA NATH : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are getting financial assistance from Japan to develop Boudh pilgrimage spots; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARTI) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Government entered into a loan agreement with the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) of Japan in January, 1992 for conservation and development of Ajanta & Ellora in Maharashtra. The Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund assistance is to the tune of 3745 million Japanese Yen. The major components of the project are afforestation, upgradation of airport facilities at Aurangabad, strengthening and improvement of roads, augmentation of water supply and sewage, improvement of electricity supply, conservation of monuments and visitors management facilities.

The Government had also entered into a loan agreement with the Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund (OECF) of Japan in December, 1988 for development of infrastructure facilities along with identified Buddhist circuit in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. It was agreed that Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund would extend financial assistance to the tune of 7.7 billion Japanese Yen. The major components of the project were strengthening of National Highways, State Highways, landscaping, augmentation of water and electricity supply, provision of wayside amenities etc. The places covered under this project are Sarnath, Kushinagar, Piprahawa, Sravasti in Uttar Pradesh and Bodhgaya, Nalanda, Rajgir and Vaishali in Bihar. The project has been completed.

*[English]***Panchayat Elections**

2621. SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR:
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of States where Panchayat elections have not been held for the last three years; and

(b) action taken by the Union Government in regard to holding Panchayat elections in these States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA) : (a) Panchayat elections have not been held for the last more than three years in Arunachal Pradesh, Bihar and Pondicherry.

(b) The Panchayati Raj Acts enacted by Bihar and Pondicherry have been challenged in various courts and the matters are sub-judice. The Union Government has been urging the State Governments to take steps to get the pending petitions disposed of early.

Arunachal Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act has not received the assent of the President of India. Since Arunachal Pradesh does not have an indigenous population belonging to the Scheduled Castes, a Constitutional Amendment to exempt the State from the requirement of making provisions for reservation of seats for the Scheduled Castes in that State's Panchayati Raj Act is under process.

Drinking Water Schemes

2622. SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating any scheme to provide drinking water to rural and hilly areas of the country particularly in North-East;

(b) If so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) the number of drinking water projects pending with CAPART as on date, State-wise; and

(e) the time by which these projects are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) to (c) Rural Water Supply is a State subject. The State Governments implement the programme under the State Sector Minimum Needs Programme (MNP). The Central Government supplements the efforts of the States by providing funds under Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). The powers have been delegated to the States to plan and implement their individual water supply schemes. As such scheme-wise information is not maintained at the Central level.

(d) As per the information furnished by CAPART there is no drinking water project pending with them, as on date.

(e) Does not arise.

Regularisation of Daily Wages

2623. SHRI RAMANAND SINGH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to regularise the services of daily wages workers during the current financial year; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Daily rated Casual Labourers on completion of 120 days working, are placed on monthly rate of pay. Moreover, there is a complete ban on engagement of Casual Labourers since 03.09.96.

(b) Does not arise.

Personnel at Cochin International Airport

2624. SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India is handling all flight operations at some airports in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Air India is making profit from such operations;

(d) if so, whether such an operation at Cochin International Airport requires more personnel; and

(e) if so, the steps taken for recruitment of different types of personnel for Cochin International airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) Air India is handling its own and customer airlines flights at Mumbai, Delhi, Calcutta, Trivandrum, Chennai, Cochin and Bangalore.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) The manpower requirements in different categories are being met through posting from other stations, voluntary relocation/redeployment, and secondment from Indian Airlines. Casual labour is also being engaged to meet requirement of unskilled categories.

Recruitment in Armed Forces

2625. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA:

SHRI RAJO SINGH:

SHRI TRILOCHAN KANUNGO:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of recruitment, rank-wise, made in the three wings of Armed Forces during 1997, 1998 and 1999,

State-wise with particular reference to Bihar, Haryana and Orissa;

(b) the reasons for lesser recruitment of Jawans from the above States in proportion to their population contrary to the criteria followed for recruitment of defence personnel;

(c) the details of vacancies, rank-wise, in each of the Forces, the date since when these are lying unfilled, and the reasons for not filling these posts so far; and

(d) the steps being taken to fill up all the posts in Armed Forces and the time by which this process is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) The selection of officers in the Army, Navy and Air Force is carried out on all-India basis. The recruitment of Personnel Below Officer Rank (PBOR) is made State-wise only in case of the Army while the recruitment to Navy and Air Force is made on the basis of all-India merit and there are no State-wise quota.

The State-wise figures regarding recruitment of PBORs in the Army during the last 3 years in Bihar, Haryana and Orissa are as follows:

State	Recruiting Year	Allocation of Vacancies	Actual intake	Shortage/ surplus
Bihar	1996-97	3901	4069	(+) 168
	1997-98	2868	2721	(-) 147
	1998-99	3198	2288	(-) 910
Haryana	1996-97	2197	2945	(+) 748
	1997-98	1923	2466	(+) 545
	1998-99	3673	3467	(-) 206
Orissa	1996-97	1373	1294	(-) 79
	1997-98	911	889	(-) 22
	1998-99	805	641	(-) 164

The statement gives out a mixed picture. There are shortfalls in some years and more recruitment in others, except Orissa where there is a marginal shortfall every year. Shortfall in recruitment in the case of Bihar and Orissa, in general, is mainly due to poor educational, physical and medical standards.

The vacancies in the rank of PBOR in the three services are negligible. There were approximately 7555 vacancies as on 30.9.99 in the cadre of PBOR in the Army. However, approximately 25,920 recruits were under training and hence these vacancies were only notional. There are 5172 vacancies of sailors in the Navy. The reasons for these

vacancies in the Navy are the stringent selection procedure, rigorous training etc. Additional publicity and recruitment drives are being carried out by Naval Recruiting Organisation in order to make up the shortage of sailors. In the case of the Air Force, about 1300 vacancies have been worked out for the year 2000-2001. No difficulty is envisaged in filling these vacancies.

Over Staffing

2626. DR. MANDA JAGANNATH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways realise that overstaffing in the Organisation is costing it dearly; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to review the situation and reduce staff strength?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) Increasing staff costs as a percentage of earnings is becoming a matter of concern for Indian Railway, more so after implementation of the recommendations of the Fifth Central Pay Commission. Containing manpower costs therefore not only constitutes an important challenge but also a strategic decision to ensure financial viability of the organisation.

However, even before the impact of the Vth Pay Commission could be felt, the Railways had embarked on a plan of action of regulating their manpower both in terms of numbers and skill so as to be able to build/maintain and operate the system in the most productive manner possible.

To this end, current measures include regulating manpower at all levels and comparing staff productivity through Internal Benchmarking exercises.

Integrated Rural Energy Programme

2627. SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH:
SHRI RAJO SINGH:

Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of blocks covered under the Integrated Rural Energy Programme during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the amount spent on this programme during the last three years;

(c) whether more blocks are likely to be included in the Ninth Plan under this scheme; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M.

KANNAPPAN) : (a) Information on State-wise coverage of total number of Blocks sanctioned during the last three years, i.e., 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme - Integrated Rural Energy Programme (IREP) is given in the enclosed Statement I.

(b) The total expenditure incurred in the last three years, i.e., 1996-97 to 1998-99 under IREP was Rs. 19.53 crore.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Two hundred more Blocks have been included so far during the Ninth Plan period under IREP, for which State-wise details are given in enclosed Statement-II. The Mid-Term Appraisal for the Ninth Plan has emphasised on intensification of the programme in the Blocks already covered, instead of extending it to more Blocks during the remaining period of the Ninth Plan.

Statement I

State-wise coverage of total number of blocks sanctioned during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 under integrated Rural Energy Programme

State/Union Territory	Coverage of total	Number of Blocks sanctioned
	1996-97	1997-98 and 1998-99
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh	32	32
Arunachal Pradesh	10	10
Assam	19	21
Bihar	16	56
Goa	5	5
Gujarat	25	25
Haryana	29	38
Himachal Pradesh	41	45
Jammu & Kashmir	16	28
Karnataka	31	42
Kerala	44	44
Madhya Pradesh	61	85
Maharashtra	37	37
Manipur	12	19
Meghalaya	15	16
Mizoram	9	11
Nagaland	6	25

1	2	3
Orissa	16	45
Punjab	35	40
Rajasthan	32	36
Sikkim	4	4
Tamil Nadu	21	21
Tripura	6	6
Uttar Pradesh	88	115
West Bengal	30	34
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	5	5
Chandigarh	1	1
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	1	1
Daman & Diu	1	1
Delhi	5	5
Lakshadweep	1	1
Pondicherry	6	6
Grand Total	660	860

Statement II

State-wise additional blocks sanctioned in 1997-98 and continued in 1998-99 and 1999-2000 under Integrated Rural Energy Programme

State	Coverage of additional number of Blocks
1	2
Assam	2
Bihar	40
Haryana	9
Himachal Pradesh	4
Jammu & Kashmir	12
Karnataka	11
Madhya Pradesh	24
Manipur	7
Meghalaya	1
Mizoram	2

1	2
Nagaland	19
Orissa	29
Punjab	5
Rajasthan	4
Uttar Pradesh	27
West Bengal	4
Total	200

[Translation]

Economic price of Wheat and Rice

2628. SHRI AJIT SINGH:
DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the economic prices of wheat and rice of the Food Corporation of India has gone upto rupees 808 and 980.4 per quintal respectively in the year 1998-99;

(b) whether this price is quite higher than the original procurement price;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have considered to change the functioning of the Corporation to check these rising prices;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN) : (a) to (c) Economic price/cost of wheat and rice to FCI at the BE stage and RE stage of 1998-99 was as under:

	Wheat (1998-99)		Rice (1998-99)	
	BE	RE	BE	RE
Pooled cost of grain	469.67	517.05	731.28	743.98
Procurement incidentals	111.00	115.48	65.50	65.50
Carry-over charges	23.60	20.52	-	-
Distribution cost	154.90	154.90	170.88	170.88
Economic Cost	759.17	807.95	967.66	980.36

(d) to (f) In order to contain/reduce the expenditure on high incidence of local taxes, storage, transportation, transit/storage losses which ultimately add to the Economic price/cost of FCI, it has been decided to decentralise the procurement process by dispersing the procurement centers to different parts of the country encouraging local procurement to the maximum extent. Under this scheme, the designated states would procure, store and also issue foodgrains as per allotments indicated by the Central Government under PDS. The difference between the economic cost of the State Government and the Central issue Prices is passed on to the State Government as subsidy. Under this scheme, procurement of rice was started in West Bengal during Kharif Marketing Season 1997-98. In Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh the scheme commenced w.e.f. the Rabi Marketing Season, 1999-2000 for wheat. Response from other States is either not favourable or they have yet to respond.

[English]

Degraded Land

2629. SHRI RAJAIHA MALYALA : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have launched any programme to save land degradation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total land degraded so far, State-wise; and

(d) the financial assistance provided to each State for the said programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Department of Agriculture and Co-operation in the Ministry of Agriculture is implementing various schemes for development of degraded lands through their Plan schemes namely soil conservation in the Catchment of River Valley Projects and Flood Prone Rivers, Watershed Development Project in Shifting Cultivation Areas in North Eastern States and Reclamation of Alkali Soils. However, the Department of Land Resources is also implementing an Integrated Wastelands Development Projects Scheme for development of non-forest wastelands on watershed basis in the country.

(c) A statement showing State-wise assessment of degraded area by the Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture and Co-operation is given in the enclosed Statement-I.

(d) A Statement showing State-wise funds released under the schemes referred to in the parts (a) and (b) of the Question during the first two years of the Ninth Plan Period is given in the enclosed Statement-II.

Statement I

Assessment of Degraded Lands in India by the Ministry of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture & Cooperation

Sl. No.	State/UT	Total Degraded lands (Area in lakh ha.)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	122.31
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	26.54
3.	Assam	29.99
4.	Bihar	62.52
5.	Goa	2.00
6.	Gujarat	125.86
7.	Haryana	41.62
8.	Himachal Pradesh	19.14
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	8.93
10.	Karnataka	114.03
11.	Kerala	19.35
12.	Madhya Pradesh	207.17
13.	Maharashtra	198.46
14.	Manipur	7.34
15.	Meghalaya	11.02
16.	Mizoram	6.10
17.	Nagaland	10.38
18.	Orissa	780.30
19.	Punjab	32.30
20.	Rajasthan	373.94
21.	Sikkim	3.03
22.	Tamil Nadu	38.22
23.	Tripura	2.79
24.	Uttar Pradesh	131.15
25.	West Bengal	43.03
26.	U. Ts.	3.50
27.	Coastal Sands	14.65
Total		1736.40

Statement II

Statement showing State-wise funds released under the scheme referred to in the parts (a) and (b) of the Question during the first two years of the Ninth Plan Period (1997-98 and 1998-99)

Sl. No.	State/UT	Funds released (Rs. in lakhs)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	2524.92
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	359.00
3.	Assam	262.92
4.	Bihar	29.77
5.	CAPART	250.00
6.	Gujarat	1412.09
7.	Haryana	472.00
8.	Himachal Pradesh	1958.22
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	1327.68
10.	Karnataka	2978.71
11.	Kerala	180.59
12.	Maharashtra	1904.78
13.	Manipur	840.62
14.	Madhya Pradesh	4019.41
15.	Mizoram	740.00
16.	Meghalaya	280.00
17.	Nagaland	1385.81
18.	Orissa	730.49
19.	Punjab	492.16
20.	Rajasthan	3623.85
21.	Sikkim	395.56
22.	Tamil Nadu	1620.97
23.	Tripura	376.31
24.	Uttar Pradesh	6795.50
25.	West Bengal	78.83
26.	Damodar Valley Corpn.	1633.42
27.	UTs	0.00
Total :		36,673.61

Retirement Age in Indian Airlines

2630. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the retirement age in Indian Airlines is proposed to be reduced from 60 to 58 years; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Indian Airlines is considering a proposal to reduce the retirement age from 60 to 58 years with a view to improving aircraft to employee ratio and effect savings.

Duty Free Shops

2631. DR. S. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the airports where duty free shops of ITDC are functioning at present;

(b) whether Airports Authority of India recently offered duty free shops in some of the airports and if so, the details thereof;

(c) the bidders who have applied for and on what terms and conditions;

(d) whether ITDC would be given preferential treatment; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) The duty free shops of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) are functioning at Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram and Goa airports.

(b) In January-March, 1999 Airports Authority of India (AAI) had invited tenders for Duty Free Shops at 5 International (Delhi, Calcutta, Mumbai, Chennai and Thiruvananthapuram airports) and 6 Domestic airports (Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Calicut, Hyderabad, Varanasi and Goa airports) as per the following groups:

Group-I Space measuring 1992.22 sqm. at 5 international and 6 domestic airports.

Group-II Space measuring 1660.64 sqm. at 5 international airports only.

Group-III Space measuring 331.58 sqm. at 6 domestic airports.

(c) to (e) M/s India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), M/s Weitnauer Holding Ltd., Switzerland and

M/s. Breco Holding, UK applied against the tenders and offered their bids towards space licence fee and royalty payable to AAI. Since none of the bidders offered minimum reserve price, it would be retendered.

Pantry Cars with Trains

2632. SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether pantry cars has been introduced in all the long distance trains on Konkan Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof, train-wise; and

(c) the time by which the pantry cars likely to be introduced in remaining long distance trains on Konkan Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) No. Sir. All Kerala bound trains on Konkan Railway have been provided with pantry cars except 2619/2620 Kurla-Mangalore Matsyagandha Express.

(c) Provision of pantry cars in the remaining long distance trains on Indian Railway including on Konkan Railway, is an ongoing process subject to demand, availability of coaching stock & operational constraints.

[Translation]

Flights of Indian Airlines

2633. DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Airlines flight No. I.C. 133 was operational on Mumbai-Ahmedabad-Indore-Bhopal-Kolkata sector during the year 1992;

(b) if so, the reasons for its closure; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be re-started?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The flight was withdrawn due to shortage of operating crew and commercial considerations.

(c) Indian Airlines, at present, has no plans to reintroduce this service.

Check on Extravagance

2634. DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI SHANKERSINH VAGHELA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to take steps to check the wastage of money and extravagance in the Railway Department;

(b) if so, whether any estimates has been made in regard to the wastage of money and extravagance;

(c) if so, the estimated percentage of wasteful expenditure out of non-plan expenditure;

(d) the criteria and the guidelines on the basis of which these estimates have been made and the targeted amount likely to be saved annually as a result thereof; and

(e) the instructions given to check this wasteful expenditure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (e) Railways have taken certain steps to curtail non-plan expenditure which is facing a substantial increase on account of factors such as increase of diesel prices, revision of traction power tariffs by certain State Electricity Boards, revision of rates of certain allowances and incentive bonus to workshop staff, pensionary charges more than initial estimates, etc. These increases are being met to a large extent by tight control of expenditure in other areas of non-plan expenditure such as fuel and power consumption, contractual payments, purchase of materials, over time allowance etc. Austerity and economy measures are also being enforced in areas such as hospitality, advertisements, inaugural ceremonies, seminars and workshops, contingent office expenditure, travel etc. Some of the other aspects of working that are receiving regular attention are productive use of man power, better asset utilisation, improvement in inventory management etc. With the instructions on control of expenditure and measures for austerity and economy being emphasized at various operating levels, it is expected that no avoidable expenditure would be incurred.

Weight of Military Uniforms

2635. SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the weight of uniforms (including full kit) of an Indian Army Soldier is comparatively higher than the uniform of the soldiers of the developed countries;

(b) if so, whether there is any plan to modify their uniform; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) Comparative assessment of the weight of uniform (including full kit) of an Indian Army soldier with the uniforms of the soldiers of the developed countries has not been carried out. However, the uniforms of the soldiers of western countries are expected to be lighter as they are made of a mix of synthetic materials as compared to the uniform of an Indian soldier which are based on cotton/canvas.

The uniform of the Indian Army soldiers is being continuously improved. An Improved Combat Kit comprising nine items has already been introduced for the entire infantry in the first phase. The quality of five more items of personal clothing has also improved. Eight new items of better quality for extreme cold clothing have been developed. Apart from being lighter in weight and better in quality these will provide more warmth to the troops.

[English]

Extension of Mumbai Suburban Railway upto Dahanu Road Station

2636. SHRI CHINTAMAN WANGA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to extend Mumbai suburban railway upto Dahanu Road Station;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which it is likely to be extended;

(d) whether any representation to extend Mumbai suburban railway upto Bord Road Station has been received by the Government; and

(e) if so, the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (c) Mumbai Suburban Section has been extended upto Dahanu Road Station from December 1995.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Employment opportunity in Tourism Sector

2637. SHRI RAMCHANDRA VEERAPPA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the employment opportunity for youths in the tourism sector;

(b) if so, the target fixed for the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(c) whether various States have submitted schemes for generating employment by developing tourism; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARTI) : (a) to (d) Growth of tourism results in increased employment opportunities for people including the youth. The direct employment in the sector during 1997-98 was about 9.8 million persons accounting for about 2.4% of total labour force. State Governments submit projects/schemes for obtaining Central Financial Assistance for development of tourist infrastructure in their respective states.

[Translation]

Gauge Conversion of Ratlam-Indore Rail Line

2638. SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the survey for gauge conversion of Ratlam-Indore rail line has completed;

(b) if so, the further steps taken on the survey report; and

(c) if not, the reasons for delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Survey report is being recast by the Zonal Railways as the gauge conversion of entire route Ratlam-Indore-Khandwa-Purna MG line into BG will have to be considered.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

International Flights from Thiruvananthapuram

2639. SHRI V.S. SIVAKUMAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the International flights of Air India that were operating per week from the Thiruvananthapuram International Airport prior to November, 1998;

(b) whether Air India's International flights operating from Thiruvananthapuram were cancelled during the period from November, 1998 to October, 1999; and

(c) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) (a) Prior to November, 1998, Air India was operating 23 flights per week through Thiruvananthapuram International Airport as per details given below:

- (i) 16 flights with Air India's own aircraft.
- (ii) 4 flights jointly with Kuwait Airways and 3 flights with Gulf Air.

(b) and (c) No flight has been cancelled. However, 3 flights were shifted to Kozhikode and 7 flights to Kochi. These flights were shifted for commercial and operational reasons.

Export Industry Status to Tourism

2640. SHRI SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the matter of granting of export industry status to tourism industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the growth perception of tourism industry for the next three years; and

(d) the foreign exchange earnings of tourism industry during the last three years and current year so far, year-wise/State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARTI) : (a) and (b) The Government of India has accorded Export House Status to Tourism. The tourism units which are entitled for recognition as Export House/Trading House/Star Trading House/Super Star Trading House are entitled to such benefits as specified in the Chapter 12 of Hand-book of Procedures (Vol.I) of Union Ministry of Commerce.

(c) The Working Group of Tourism for the Ninth Five Year Plan constituted by Planning Commission has projected a growth of 8% in tourist arrivals till 2002.

(d) Estimated foreign exchange earnings during the last three years and upto November, 1999 are given below:

Year	Rupees in Crores
1996	9919.96
1997	10725.64
1998	11540.25
upto Nov. 1999	11148.29 (Prov.)

Merger of Indian Airlines and Air India

2641. DR. NITISH SENGUPTA : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal for the merger of Air India and Indian Airlines;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which a final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Concessional Rail Passes to Journalists

2642. DR. CHARAN DAS MAHANT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether concessional railway passes are issued to the district level recognised journalists;

(b) if so, the number of the journalists who have availed of this facility during the last three years, year-wise/State-wise;

(c) whether expansion of this scheme at tehsil level is being contemplated; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Press Correspondents accredited to District Headquarters are issued coupon books at 50% concession for journeys upto 30,000 Kms per annum on bonafide press work.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Proposal for Construction of Road Over Bridges

2643. KUMARI BHAVANA PUNDLIKRAO GAWALI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has sent any fresh proposal to the Union Government for construction of road over bridges;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) No, Sir. No fresh proposal has been received for construction of Road Over Bridges during current year.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Jobs to Dependants of Deceased in Jawahar Nagar Ordnance Factory

2644. SHRI HARIBHAU SHANKAR MAHALE : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases wherein wards of the deceased employees were provided/refused employment separately on compassionate grounds in Ordnance Factory located at Jawahar Nagar, Bhandara during 1994 to 1996;

(b) the reasons for refusal of employment to wards of certain deceased employees;

(c) whether the fresh recruitment has been banned in this Ordnance Factory since 1984 and a large number of employees have been retrenched;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the steps being taken to ensure that wards of deceased get employment and the retrenched employees not come on the road?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK) : (a) to (e) The object of the scheme for compassionate appointment is to grant appointment on compassionate grounds to a dependant family member of a Government servant dying in harness or who is retired on medical grounds, thereby leaving his family in penury and without any means of livelihood, to relieve the family of the Government servant concerned from financial destitution and to help it get over the emergency.

During 1994 to 1996, 48 dependants of the deceased employees of the factory were given appointments on compassionate grounds. 84 cases were regretted, as they did not fulfil the eligibility criteria laid down in this regard.

Fresh induction of man-power in ordnance factories, based on fuctional requirement is being made. There has been no retrenchment of employees.

Compassionate appointment to the dependants of the deceased employees in terms of the guidelines issued by the Government, is being provided.

[English]

Restoration of Kakinada Kotipalli Rail Line

2645. SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to restore the Kakinada Kotipalli rail line;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the restoration work is likely to be started and completed; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Restoration of Kakinada-Kotipalli line is an approved work, which would be taken up after obtaining the necessary clearances. However, before the clearances can be obtained, State Government have to hand over the land in lieu of the land released by the dismantled line, which has been built upon by the State Government.

(c) The work will be taken up once the land is handed over to the Railway and the requisite clearances have been obtained. The same will be progressed to completion in the coming years as per availability of resources.

(d) Does not arise.

Engagement of Contract Labourers by CONCOR

2646. SHRI BIKASH CHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of illegal engagement of contract labourers by Container Corporation of India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Container Corporation is arranging finance for purchase of capital equipments for use by the contractors;

(d) if so, whether such financing is permissible under the rules;

(e) if not, the action taken/proposed to be taken against the guilty officials;

(f) whether it is fact that one such contractor engaged by the Corporation is an accused in a case before the Metropolitan Magistrate, Delhi; and

(g) if so, the reasons for engaging such contractor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) No case of illegal engagement of contract labourers is in the knowledge of the Container Corporation of India Ltd. (CONCOR). However, certain court cases have been filed for alleged violation of Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and thus the matter is sub judice.

- (c) Yes, Sir.
- (d) Yes, Sir.
- (e) Does not arise.
- (f) and (g) CONCOR is not aware of any such case.

Ban on Export of Onion

2647. SHRI RAMCHANDER BAINDA : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are considering to lift ban on export of onions; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) and (b) The Government has permitted the export of one lakh tonnes of onions of all varieties from 1.12.99 to 31.1.2000. The export of this quantity has been allotted to various Central and State cooperative agencies. The decision to permit export of onion has been taken to protect the interests of the farmers after taking into account the higher production of Kharif onion crop and the prevailing reasonable prices of onions in the country.

Annual Increments to Personnel of Signal Corps

2648. SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether a large number of other rank personnel of Signal Corps are not getting their annual increments for the last several years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Signal Corps Headquarters at Jabalpur has been receiving repeated requests from the affected personnel in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon; and
- (e) the steps taken to ensure that annual increments and other pay revisions are given to them without further delay?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Passenger Amenities Committee

2649. SHRI DINSHA PATEL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government have recently constituted Passenger Amenities Committee;
- (b) if so, the composition and the functions of the Committee; and
- (c) the time by which the Committee is likely to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The composition of the Committee is as under:

(i)	Dr. Bikram Sarkar	Chairman
(ii)	Shri M. W. Haque	Member
(iii)	Smt. Maya Singh	Member
(iv)	Shri Nimai Bhattacharyya	Member
(v)	Shri Lakshman Jha	Member
(vi)	Smt. Kalyani Shankar	Member

The functions of the Committee are to check the passenger amenities provided at the railway stations and on the trains with special reference to the following aspects:

- (a) General cleanliness and environmental conditions
- (b) Drinking water arrangements
- (c) Facilities provided for dissemination of information to the passengers, like, Enquiry Offices, Public Address System, Indicator Boards, etc.
- (d) Provision of lights, fans and other electrical amenities
- (e) Provision and maintenance of public conveniences like public lavatories, bathrooms, retiring rooms and waiting halls
- (f) Provision of such conveniences as benches on platforms, wheel chairs, stretchers, luggage trolleys, etc.
- (g) Reservation and booking for passengers
- (h) Security of passengers in carriages and at station premises

- (i) Losses in railway revenues; and
 (j) Ensuring courtesy to passengers.

(c) The Committee submits periodical reports to improve the various aspects concerning passenger amenities on Railways.

[Translation]

Assurance Regarding Railways

2650. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government vide its letter No. 98/MOS(R)/Cons (R)/38/Vol-V dated August 10, 1998 had given certain assurance for Panvel station regarding reservation quota in various trains, diversion of trains, construction of road over bridge and new passenger services to Thal and Uran;

(b) if so, whether all these assurances have been fulfilled;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Government to fulfil these assurances and the time by which all these assurances are likely to be fulfilled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (d) The reservation work at Panvel has been computerised w.e.f. 10.8.1999 giving the passengers of Panvel access to the entire reserved accommodation of train originating on Mumbai PRS. As regard 2431/2432 Rajdhani Express trains, due to limited availability of reserved accommodation and full utilisation of quotas at the existing quota holding stations, it is not feasible to increase the existing quota. As regards construction of Road over bridge, temporary diversion connecting NH-4B to NH-4 has been constructed by CIDCO and opened to traffic on 23.6.1998 and level crossing NH-4B closed enabling restoration of train services from 26.8.1998. Construction of Road over bridge on NH-4B is in progress by CIDCO. Regarding train service to Thal and Uran, Panvel-Uran section is not fit for passengers traffic. Thal is a private freight siding. Introduction of passenger services is therefore not feasible.

[English]

The Essential Commodities Act, 1955

2651. DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to amend the Essential Commodities Act, 1955; and

(b) if so, the details, thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) and (b) Yes Sir. In pursuance of recommendations made by the Expert Group constituted to review the administrative laws and the Group of Officers constituted as per decision taken in the meeting of the Chief Ministers of States/Uts. held on 27.11.98 the Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill, 1999 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 5.3.99. This Bill lapsed on dissolution of the Lok Sabha. It is proposed to re-introduce the Bill. The proposed amendments include substantial increase in fines and imprisonment, making all offences cognizable and non-bailable except the minor offences committed for the first time, requirement of prior permission of an officer not below the rank of Executive Magistrate for making entry, search and seizure, power of arrest to be exercised by an officer not below the rank of sub-inspector of police, sale of seized goods to be sold through PDS, provision for allowance of margin between physical stock and stock in record, appeal against confiscation to lie with the State Government and deletion of the item "component parts and accessories of automobiles" from the list of essential commodities.

[Translation]

Misutilization of Funds Allocated by 'CAPART'

2652. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any complaints regarding the misuse of funds allocated by 'CAPART' in Scheduled Castes/Tribal areas during the last three years along with the details of the institutions, State-wise; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA) : (a) and (b) As per information received from CAPART, it has received a number of complaints regarding misuse of funds allotted to Voluntary Organisations in general. The Council does not have schemes exclusively for ST or SC areas only. However, in all its schemes priority is given to SC/ST families. Nineteen NGOs, as per enclosed Statement have been placed under "Further Assistance Stopped" category and the process of inquiry & investigation has been initiated by CAPART.

Statement		
Year	Sl. No.	Name of the Voluntary Organisation
1	2	3
1996-97	1.	Manav Kalyan Sansthan, Ismileganj (U.P.)
	2.	Social Institute of National Action, Chungigaon Post-Tengakot, District Dibrugarh, Assam.
	3.	Tenkaghat Anchalik Mahila Samiti, Chungigaon, Post Tenkaghat, District Dibrugarh, Assam.
	4.	Ashok Vidya Mandir Samiti, Morena, M.P.
	5.	Self Employed Women Association, Gandhi Bhavan, Shymala Hills, Bhopal.
1997-98	6.	Khug valley Women Welfare Agency, Mualvaiphei, P. O. Churchandrapur, Manipur.
	7.	Ratnachira, Post Satsangha, Puri, Orissa.
	8.	Bal Evam Mahila Gramin Vikash Sansthan, Fatehpuri, Vaishali, Bihar.
	9.	Seulipur Udyan Club, Vill. Seulipur, Post Paschimbar, District Midnapore.
	10.	Village Improvement Service Association, Serikavachan, Post Endal, District T.S., (Tamil Nadu).
	11.	Sunderban Gandhi Society, Vill. Mathuraganda, Post Amalamate, District-24-Parganas (S), West Bengal.
	12.	Foundation for Environment and Economic Service, Joujam Building, Chafad Avenue, Imphal, Manipur.
	13.	Sapermeina Women Society, Vill. Sapermeina, Sadar Hills, Manipur.
	14.	Vivekananda Gramya Vikas Kendra, Hindal Road, Dhenkanal, Orissa.
	15.	Rashtriya Samaj Kalyan Sansthan, Sahajahanpur, Fatua, District Patna, Bihar.
1998-99	16.	Rural Development and Peace Foundation, 93-Saint Mary Road, Avirampuram, Madras.

1	2	3
	17.	Mizoram Buddhist Development Welfare Association, Tabla Bash, District Lunglie, Mizoram.
	18.	Rajarampur Gram Unnayan Samiti, Village & Post Office Uttarajarampur, District South-24-Parganas, West Bengal.
	19.	Study and Action for Comprehensive Development, Post Office Box No. 26, Dimapur, Nagaland.

Bilaspur Railway Zone

2653. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the progress made so far to establish Bilaspur railway zone;

(b) the details of the funds allocated by the Government for this purpose; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be established and made functional alongwith its detailed jurisdiction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Progress of the zone is going on in a phased manner. Land acquisition process has been started by Government of Madhya Pradesh and a sum of Rs. 30.0 lakhs has been deposited for the same.

(b) An outlay of Rs. 3.0 crores has been made in the budget during the year 1999-2000 for setting up of the Bilaspur Zone.

(c) The jurisdiction of Bilaspur zone has not yet been finalised. At present it is not feasible to indicate a time frame by which the zone will get established and become functional.

[English]

Electrification and Doubling of Railway Lines

2654. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:
SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of rail lines on which doubling and electrification works has been going on in the country;

(b) the date on which the works were started on these lines and the extent to which the works have been completed till now alongwith the expenditure incurred thereon; and

(c) the time by which the works are likely to be completed and expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

Slum Pockets on Railway Land in Mumbai

2655. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of slum pockets located on Railway land in Mumbai;

(b) the number out of them where some basic amenities have been provided;

(c) whether the matter regarding issuance of N.O.C. for providing basic amenities in the remaining pockets is still pending with her Ministry; and

(d) if so, the time by which this matter is likely to be resolved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) There are about 34,000 number of hutments on Railway land in Mumbai located in different pockets.

(b) No basic amenities have been provided to the slum dwellers by the Railways as these are unauthorised occupants on Railway land.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Consumption of Foodgrain

2656. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state the per capita consumption of foodgrains during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 in the country, State-wise with particular reference to West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN) : The per capita net availability of foodgrains, taken as consumption, in the country is expected to increase from 164.5 (kg/year) in 1998 to 170.6 (kg/year) in 1999. The per capita net availability of foodgrains is not being compiled on State-wise basis.

A Statement showing per capita net availability of foodgrains in India, is enclosed.

Statement

Per capita net availability of foodgrains in India

(As on 09-12-1999)
(Kgs. per year)

Year	Rice	Wheat	Other Cereals	Cereals	Gram	Pulses	Foodgrains	Average of 5 yrs. Plans
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1951	58.0	24.0	40.0	122.0	8.2	22.1	144.1	
1956	68.7	22.5	40.7	131.9	10.6	25.7	157.6	155.6 (I) (1951-56)
1961	73.4	28.9	43.6	145.9	11.0	25.2	171.1	163.8(II)(1956-61)
1966	59.1	34.8	37.5	131.4	6.7	17.6	149.0	164.0(III)(1961-66)
1971	70.3	37.8	44.3	152.4	7.3	18.7	171.1	165.3(IV)(1969-74)
1976	68.5	29.1	39.2	136.8	7.4	18.5	155.3	161.0(V)(1974-79)
1981	72.2	47.3	32.8	152.3	4.9	13.7	166.0	
1982	70.5	46.7	34.6	151.8	5.1	14.3	166.1	
1983	62.0	52.7	30.4	145.1	5.7	14.4	159.5	
1984	72.2	51.4	36.1	159.7	5.0	15.3	175.0	

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1985	68.9	50.6	32.1	151.6	4.7	13.9	165.5	166.4(VI)(1980-85)
1986	77.4	55.1	25.8	158.4	5.9	16.0	174.3	
1987	75.2	57.6	25.9	158.7	4.5	13.3	172.0	
1988	68.7	56.3	25.1	150.1	3.5	13.3	163.4	
1989	78.5	57.0	29.3	164.8	4.9	15.3	180.1	
1990	77.4	48.4	31.7	157.5	3.9	15.0	172.5	172.3(VII)(1985-90)
1991	80.9	60.0	29.2	171.0	4.9	15.2	186.2	
1992	79.2	57.9	21.5	158.6	3.7	12.5	171.1	
1993	73.4	51.2	31.6	156.2	3.9	13.2	169.4	
1994	75.7	58.2	24.5	158.4	4.3	13.6	172.0	
1995	80.8	63.4	23.9	168.1	5.5	13.9	182.0	
1996	75.4	64.9	22.9	163.2	4.2	12.1	175.3	
1997	79.1	66.2	26.9	172.2	4.6	13.7	185.9	176.9(VIII)(1992-97)
1998(P)	73.4	55.3	23.7	152.4	4.9	12.1	164.5	
1999(P)	73.8	56.9	25.8	156.5	5.2	14.1	170.6	

P-Provisional.

NOTE: Figures in respect of per capita availability given above are not strictly representative of actual level of consumption in the country especially as they do not take into account any change in stocks in possession of traders, producers and consumers.

For calculation of per capita net availability the figures of Net Imports from 1981 to 1994 are based on imports and exports on Government of India account only. Net imports from 1995 onwards are the total exports and imports (on government as well as private accounts.)

Per capita net availability of foodgrains in India

(As on 09-12-1999)
(Grams per day)

Year	Rice	Wheat	Other Cereals	Cereals	Gram	Pulses	Foodgrains	Average of 5 yrs. Plans
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1951	158.9	65.7	109.6	334.2	22.5	60.7	394.9	
1956	187.7	61.5	111.2	360.4	29.0	70.3	430.7	425.9(I)(1951-56)
1961	201.1	79.1	119.5	399.7	30.2	69.0	468.7	448.5(II)(1956-61)
1966	161.9	95.4	102.6	359.9	18.3	48.2	408.1	449.0(III)(1961-66)
1971	192.6	103.6	121.4	417.6	20.0	51.2	468.8	452.5(IV)(1969-74)
1976	187.2	79.5	107.4	373.8	20.2	50.5	424.3	440.8(V)(1974-79)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1981	197.8	129.6	89.9	417.3	13.4	37.5	454.8	
1982	193.2	127.9	94.8	415.9	14.0	39.2	455.1	
1983	169.8	144.4	83.3	397.5	15.6	39.5	437.0	
1984	197.8	140.8	98.9	437.5	13.7	41.9	479.4	
1985	188.8	138.6	87.9	415.3	12.9	38.1	453.4	455.9(VI)(1980-85)
1986	212.0	151.0	70.7	433.7	16.2	43.8	477.5	
1987	206.0	157.8	71.0	434.8	12.3	36.4	471.2	
1988	188.2	154.2	68.8	411.2	9.6	36.4	447.6	
1989	215.0	156.2	80.3	451.5	13.4	41.9	493.4	
1990	212.1	132.6	86.8	431.5	10.7	41.1	472.6	472.5(VII)(1985-90)
1991	221.7	166.8	80.0	468.5	13.4	41.6	510.1	
1992	217.0	158.6	58.9	434.5	10.1	34.3	468.8	
1993	201.1	140.2	86.6	427.9	10.7	36.2	464.1	
1994	207.4	159.5	67.1	434.0	11.8	37.2	471.2	
1995	221.4	173.8	65.4	460.6	15.1	38.1	498.7	
1996	206.5	177.8	62.7	447.0	11.5	33.2	480.2	
1997	216.7	181.4	73.7	471.8	12.6	37.5	509.3	484.7(VIII)(1992-97)
1998(P)	201.1	151.5	64.9	417.5	13.5	33.2	450.7	
1999(P)	202.2	155.9	70.7	428.8	14.2	38.6	467.4	

P-Provisional.

NOTE: Figures in respect of per capita availability given above are not strictly representative of actual level of consumption in the country especially as they do not take into account any change in stocks in possession of traders, producers and consumers.

For calculation of per capita net availability the figures of Net Imports from 1981 to 1994 are based on imports and exports on Government of India account only. Net imports from 1995 onwards are the total exports and imports (on government as well as private accounts.)

On-going Railway Projects in North-Eastern Region

2657. SHRI HOLKHOMANG HAOKIP : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of various on-going project viz. gauge conversion, new railway lines, construction of bridges etc. in the State of Manipur and other States of North-Eastern Region;

(b) the progress made so far in this regard;

(c) the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to expedite the completion of these projects;

(d) the details of new railway projects announced during the last three years; and

(e) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) (a) and (b) Statement-I is attached.

(c) Railways are giving top priority to all projects in North East Region. The progress is being continuously monitored to ensure that there is no slippage. 10% of the budgetary support is being spent on Railway projects in this region.

(d) and (e) Statement-II is attached.

Statement I*The details of various ongoing projects in North Eastern Region and progress thereof*

S. No.	Description of work	Year of sanction	Original sanctioned cost	Latest anticipated cost	Exp. Upto 31.3.99	Outlay during 99-2000	Target date for completion	Progress
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
NEW LINE PROJECTS								
1.	Rail-cum Road Bridge over River Brahmaputra near Jogighopa and new rail line from Jogighopa to Kamakhya (142.15 km)	83-84	179.00	637.00	598.52	10.00	31.3.2000	Bridge across river Brahmaputra near Jogighopa alongwith Railway line from Jogighopa to Goalpara (20 km) have been commissioned in April 1998. Work on 122 km Railway line from Goalpara to Kamakhya (Guwahati) is in advanced stage and is targeted for completion by 31.3.2000.
2.	New Broad Gauge line from Dudhnoi to Depa (15.5 km)	92-93	21.26	22.23	1.70	2.00	Not fixed	Out of the 15.5 km line about 5 km is in the state of Meghalaya. No progress could be made on land acquisition in Meghalaya in spite of continuous persuasion. Work will be taken up only after land is made available in Meghalaya.
3.	New line from Kumarghat to Agartala (119 km)	96-97	575.00	849.00	24.27	40.00	Not fixed	This line passes through difficult hilly area. Work has been started in the stretch falling in plain area. i.e. 20 km length from Kumarghat end and 22 km length from Agartala end. Final location survey work in the remaining 77 km stretch, in hilly terrain is in progress. Work will be started in this portion on completion of survey which is likely by March, 2000.
4.	New Broad Gauge line from Harmuti to Itanagar (33 km)	96-97	156.00	156.00	0.03	10.00	Not fixed	Final location survey for this line is in advanced stage. Construction work will be started shortly, for which plans for land acquisition are under preparation.
5.	New line from Diphu to Karong as Phase I of line to Imphal (123 km)	97-98	800.00	1600.00	—	10.29	Not fixed	Survey for taking up construction of this line is yet to be done. Tenders for carrying out the survey are under process. Work on the construction of the line will be taken up after completion of the final location survey.
6.	Rail-cum-road bridge over river Brahmaputra near Bogibil with linking line between Dibrugarh and North Bank line	97-98	1000.00	1000.00	—	5.00	Not fixed	Survey and investigation for this bridge are being carried out by M/s. RITES. Construction work will be taken up on completion of survey and investigation which is likely to be completed by June, 2000.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
GAUGE CONVERSION PROJECTS								
1.	Lumding-Dibrugarh including branch lines (628 km)	93-94	317.00	734.00	618.00	26.71	Completed except Makum-Dangori and Amguri-Tuli branch lines	Lumding-Tinsukhiya-Dibrugarh/Ledo commissioned on 19.5.97. Branch lines of Furkating-Mariani & Simalguri-Moranhat commissioned on 15.8.98. Arrangement for taking up conversion of Amguri-Tuli (15 km) and Makum-Dangori (32 km) are being made.
2.	Lumding-Silchar (198 km)	96-97	648.00	648.00	41.21	40.00	Not fixed	This line passes through difficult hilly terrain. Construction work on 70 km stretch in plains, viz. 30 km between Silchar-Badarpur and 40 km between Lumding-Lanting has been started. Survey work in remaining 128 km stretch from Lanting to Chandranathpur is in progress by RITES. Work in this stretch will be taken up on completion of survey which is likely to be completed by March, 2000.
3.	New Jalpaiguri-Siliguri (280 km) and branch lines Fakiragram-Dhubri (61km) Alipurduar-Bamanhat (76 km)	97-98	380.00	595.00	0.001	48.00	Not fixed	CCEA clearances is received in Feb, 1999. Work started on earthwork and bridges, for the main line. Work on branch lines will be started after work on main line picks up.
4.	Katakhal-Bhairabi	97-98	200.00	200.00	0.01	2.00	Not fixed	CCEA clearances is received in Feb, 1999. Preliminary arrangement are being made to undertake the work.
BRIDGE WORKS								
1.	Bongaigaon: Road over bridge in lieu of level crossing No. SK-49	95-96	3.20	10.66	Nil	0.30	Not fixed	General arrangement drawing of this ROB has been finalised in consultation with Assam. PU/PWD has been requested to submit the revised estimate. Work will be taken up after estimate is sanctioned.
2.	Agthori-Changsari: Road Over Bridge in lieu of level crossing	96-97	10.01	10.01	Nil	0.13	Not fixed	General arrangement drawing approved. Detailed drawings designs and estimate are awaited from PWD.
3.	Kendukona-Rangiya: Road Over Bridge in lieu of level crossing No. SK-13	96-97	7.62	7.62	Nil	0.13	Not fixed	General arrangement drawing approved. Detailed drawings, designs and estimates are awaited from PWD.
4.	Guwahati (Athgaon): Road Over Bridge in lieu of 'A' class level crossing.	97-98	14.87	14.87	Nil	0.09	Not fixed	Earlier General Arrangement Drawing which envisages construction of ROB with steel girders has now been changed by State PWD to PSC girders. Revised drawing is under approval.

Statement II*Details of new railway projects announced during the last three years and action taken thereon*

S. No.	Description of work	Year of Sanction	Original Sanctioned Cost	Latest Anticipated Cost	Action taken
NEW LINE PROJECTS					
1.	New line from Kumarghat to Agartala (119 km)	96-97	575.00	849.00	This line passes through difficult hilly area. Work has been started in the stretch falling in plain area. i.e. 20 km length from Kumarghat end and 22 km length from Agartala end. Final location survey work in the remaining 77 km stretch in hilly terrain is in progress. Work will be started in this portion on completion of survey which is likely by March, 2000.
2.	New Broad Gauge line from Harmuti to Itanagar (33 km)	96-97	156.00	156.00	Final location survey for this line is in advanced stage. Construction work will be started shortly, for which plans for land acquisition are under preparation.
3.	New Broad Gauge line from Diphu to Karong as Phase I of line to Imphal (123 km)	97-98	800.00	1600.00	Survey for taking up construction of this line is yet to be done. Tenders for carrying out the survey are under process. Work on the construction of the line will be taken up after completion of the final location survey.
4.	Rail-cum-Road Bridge over river Brahmaputra near Bogibil with linking lines between Dibrugarh and North Bank line	97-98	1000.00	1000.00	Survey and investigation for this bridge are being carried out by M/s. RITES. Construction work will be taken up on completion of survey and investigation which is likely to be completed by June, 2000.
GAUGE CONVERSION					
1.	Lumding-Silchar (198 km)	96-97	648.00	648.00	This line passes through difficult hilly terrain. Construction work on 70 km stretch in plains, viz. 30 km between Silchar-Badarpur and 40 km between Lumding-Lanting has been started. Survey work in remaining 128 km stretch from Lanting to Chandranathpur is in progress by RITES. Work in this stretch will be taken up on completion of survey which is likely to be completed by March, 2000.
2.	New Jalpaiguri-Siliguri-New Bongaigaon (280 km) and Branch lines Fakiragram-Dhubri (61 km) Alipurduar—Bamanhat (76 km)	97-98	380.00	595.00	CCEA clearances is received in Feb, 1999. Work started on earthwork and bridges, for the main line. Work on branch lines will be started after work on main line picks up.
3.	Katakhal-Bhairabi	97-98	200.00	200.00	CCEA clearances is received in Feb, 1999. Preliminary arrangement are being made to undertake the work.

Seminar on Indian Railways

2658. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a six member team of Japan are holding seminar on Railway Safety for the benefit of Indian Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir. On request from Indian Railways, Japanese Government deputed six members in the field of safety for holding safety seminars on the Indian Railways.

(b) A Statement is enclosed.

(c) The seminar has been useful in apprising the officers of various departments of Indian Railways on accident prevention measures taken by Japanese Railway. This knowledge is likely to help them in ensuring better safety in Indian Railways.

Statement

Three seminars were held as per following details

Place	Date of Seminar	Participating Railways
New Delhi	29th & 30th Nov.'99	Railway Board, Northern, North Eastern, Western Railway and RDSO/Lucknow.
Calcutta	2nd & 3rd Dec.'99	Eastern, South Eastern, Northeast Frontier & Metro Railways.
Secunderabad	6th & 7th Dec.'99	Southern, South Central, Central & Konkan Railway.

The Japanese experts delivered lectures on the following six topics:

- (i) Present situation of Train Operation and Accidents in Japan.
- (ii) Main laws & safety standards in Japanese Railways.
- (iii) Progress of Safety Technology for Train Operation in Japan.
- (iv) Safety measures for East-Japan Railway (I).
- (v) Safety measures for East-Japan Railway (II).
- (vi) Automatic Train Protection System in Japan.

Fire in Himgiri Express

2659. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the fire broke out in Himgiri Express on November 29, 1999 at the Ambala-Ludhiana Sector; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to avoid fire incidents on running trains?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) No, Sir. There was no fire in Himgiri Express on 29th November 1999 in Ambala-Ludhiana section. However, in one coach of Himgiri Express, hot box was detected and the coach was detached at Rajpura station.

(b) Does not arise.

Intrusion by Taliban Forces

2660. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government's attention has been drawn to the report captioned "Taliban force ready for intrusion" appearing in the *Hindustan Times* dated June 13, 1999 stating that a large group of 2,000 to 3,000 Taliban force were ready to cross the Kashmir border and launch a Jihad; and

(b) if so, the Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) Government is aware of media reports of this effect. Government is also aware that there was a concentration of terrorists belonging to various pro-Pakistan terrorist outfits opposite Uri and Poonch sectors during June and July 1999. However, there are no reports to confirm the presence of Taliban forces for intrusion into Jammu and Kashmir.

A constant vigil is maintained by our troops on the border. Necessary measures have been taken to strengthen border management and to gear up the intelligence machinery in order to check infiltration.

Direct Flights

2661. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to start direct flights on Delhi-Rajkot, Rajkot-Bhavnagar and Jamnagar-Delhi sectors;

(b) the time by which these flights are likely to be commissioned;

(c) whether there was a direct flight in the past on Delhi-Rajkot sector; and

(d) if so, the reasons for its cancellation?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) and (b) Airline operators are free to airlinck places based on their commercial judgement, subject to compliance with the Route Dispersal Guidelines which provide for certain minimum operations in specified categories of routes.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The service was withdrawn due to aircraft capacity constraints and commercial considerations.

[Translation]

Sources of Non-Conventional Energy

2662. SHRI RAJO SINGH:

SHRI RAMCHANDRA VEERAPPA:

Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have carried out any survey in regard to the possibilities of sources of non-conventional energy in all the States of the country and particularly of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the funds allocated and released during each of the last three years for promotion of non-conventional energy sources, State-wise;

(d) whether these funds have been utilised fully;

(e) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the time by which all possibilities are likely to be exploited in regard to sources of non-conventional energy in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) and (b) Various studies sponsored/

undertaken by the Government have indicated the broad potential of major Non-Conventional Energy Sources on a country-wide basis is given in enclosed Statement-I. The estimated potential of major non-conventional energy sources in the State of Bihar in respect of Biogas, Improved Chulha, Small Hydro Power (SHP upto 3 MW) and Bagasse based Co-generation in Sugar mills is 9.40 lakh, 123.83 lakhs, 191.66 MW and 200 MW respectively.

(c) to (e) The details of the funds allocated and released state-wise during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 by the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources are given in enclosed statement-II. These funds are being utilized by the States for promotion of non-conventional energy sources. The utilization status of these funds is monitored closely to ensure that the funds are utilised fully.

(f) The exploration of the potential of renewable energy and its exploitation is a continuous and on-going process. The potential/exploitation of renewable energy offer limitless possibilities and the use of renewable energy is expected to increase sharply over the years.

Statement I

Broad Potential of Non-Conventional Energy Sources in the Country

Source/System	Estimated Potential
1. Biogas plants (No.)	120 lakh
2. Improved Chulha (No.)	12 crores
3. Biomass	17,000 MW
4. Bagasse based Cogeneration	3500 MW
5. Solar Photovoltaic	20 MW/sq.km.
6. Solar Thermal	35 MW/sq.km
7. Wind Power	20,000 MW
8. Small Hydro Power (Upto 15 MW)	10,000 MW
9. Energy from Urban & Industrial Waste	1700 MW

MW = Mega-watt

Sq. km. = Square Kilometer

Details of State-wise and Programme-wise Funds Allocated and Released during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 under Biomass Gasifier, Energy from Waste, Solar Cooker & Solar Photovoltaic Programmes of the Ministry

(Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No.	STATES/UT	Biomass Gasifier			Energy from Waste			Solar Cooker			Solar Photovoltaic (SPV)		
		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
1.	Andhra Pradesh	0.42	0.75	0.29	0.16	0.11	0.44	0.06	0.03	0.02	0.54	0.00	1.65
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.10	0.31
3.	Assam	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.06	0.21	0.70
4.	Bihar	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.09	0.25	2.46
5.	Goa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01
6.	Gujarat	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.02	1.98	0.04	0.07	0.04	0.22	0.06	1.04
7.	Haryana	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21	1.05	1.76
8.	Himachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.56	0.70	1.67
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.90	0.40	1.63
10.	Karnataka	0.49	0.12	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.46
11.	Kerala	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.03
12.	Madhya Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.34	0.01	0.04	0.95	0.12	0.12	0.06	0.00	0.59	0.93
13.	Maharashtra	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.12	0.05	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.23	0.21
14.	Manipur	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.00	0.30
15.	Meghalaya	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.38	0.08	0.19
16.	Mizoram	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.24
17.	Nagaland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05
18.	Orissa	0.01	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.45	2.72
19.	Punjab	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.00	0.64	2.74
20.	Rajasthan	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.81	1.34	4.81
21.	Sikkim	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07
22.	Tamil Nadu	0.00	0.03	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.49
23.	Tripura	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.26	0.83
24.	Uttar Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.25	0.08	0.04	0.03	0.04	2.21	6.56	8.67
25.	West Bengal	0.07	0.20	0.23	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.03	0.02	1.01	2.12	1.73
26.	Andaman & Nicobar	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
27.	Chandigarh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.21
28.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
29.	Daman & Diu	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
30.	Delhi	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.26	0.00	0.00
31.	Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04
32.	Pondicherry	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03	0.02
33.	Others	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00

Details of State-wise and Programme-wise Funds Allocated and Released during 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 under Wind Pumping and Aero-generators, Wind Power, IREP & SADP Programmes of the Ministry

(Rs. in Crores)

Sl. No.	STATES/UT	Wind Pumping & Aerogenerators			Wind Power			IREP*			SADP**		
		1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
1.	Andhra Pradesh	0.00	0.10	0.00	0.16	0.20	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.03
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.16	0.00	0.01	0.03
3.	Assam	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.13	0.14	0.15	0.00	0.01	0.07
4.	Bihar	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.35	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.07
5.	Goa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.04	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.01
6.	Gujarat	0.18	0.00	0.10	0.67	0.48	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00
7.	Haryana	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.29	0.23	0.28	0.00	0.05	0.01
8.	Himachal Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.34	0.45	0.80	0.00	0.01	0.00
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.15	0.10	0.00	0.00	0.00
10.	Karnataka	0.03	0.05	0.00	0.01	0.08	0.00	0.16	0.28	0.40	0.08	0.03	0.05
11.	Kerala	0.00	0.01	0.06	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.45	0.33	0.37	0.00	0.00	0.00
12.	Madhya Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.00	0.72	0.68	1.08	0.02	0.06	0.09
13.	Maharashtra	0.02	0.03	0.16	1.22	0.07	1.79	0.29	0.37	0.48	0.02	0.05	0.06
14.	Manipur	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.10	0.25	0.00	0.01	0.05
15.	Meghalaya	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.51	0.11	0.27	0.00	0.00	0.00
16.	Mizoram	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.15	0.08	0.14	0.00	0.00	0.01
17.	Nagaland	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.11	0.11	0.00	0.00	0.00
18.	Orissa	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.23	0.12	0.12	0.01	0.00	0.00
19.	Punjab	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.00	0.29	0.51	0.51	0.00	0.13	0.03
20.	Rajasthan	0.00	0.19	0.12	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.18	0.20	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.01
21.	Sikkim	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.31	0.06	0.00	0.00	0.00
22.	Tamil Nadu	0.15	0.00	0.03	0.55	0.89	0.62	0.18	0.14	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.08
23.	Tripura	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.09	0.00	0.01	0.01
24.	Uttar Pradesh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.40	1.14	0.51	0.02	0.02	0.01
25.	West Bengal	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.48	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.31
26.	Andaman & Nicobar	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.04	0.04	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02
27.	Chandigarh	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.01
28.	Dadar & Nagar Haveli	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00
29.	Daman & Diu	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00
30.	Delhi	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.17	0.06	0.07	0.00	0.01	0.01
31.	Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00
32.	Pondicherry	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.00	0.00	0.01
33.	Others	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.05	0.00

* IREP = Integrated Rural Energy Programme;

** SADP = Special Area Demonstration Programme.

*[English]***Linking of Major Cities of UP with Air Service**

2663. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the major cities of Uttar Pradesh that have been linked with air services; and

(b) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to connect all the remaining major cities of Uttar Pradesh with the air service?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) At present the following cities in Uttar Pradesh are airlinked by the domestic airline operators:

Agra : Indian Airlines

Dehradun : Indian Airlines

Lucknow : Indian Airlines, Jet Airways and Sahara Airlines

Varanasi : Indian Airlines and Jet Airways

(b) Airline operators are free to airlink places based on their commercial judgment, subject to compliance with the Route Dispersal Guidelines which provide for certain minimum operations in various categories of routes.

Helicopter Services to Places of Tourist Interest

2664. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to provide helicopter services to the places of tourist interest;

(b) if so, whether State Governments are proposed to be assisted to construct helipads and also to upgrade the existing domestic airports; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) The Pawan Hans Helicopters Limited plans to operate helicopter services on Jammu-Sanjichhat-Jammu and Katra-Sanjichhat-Katra sectors.

(b) and (c) No request has been received by the Airports Authority of India from any State Government for providing assistance in construction of helipads. However, it is the constant endeavour of the Government to develop and upgrade the existing airports to meet the needs of passengers including tourists.

Distribution of unpolished Rice through P.D.S.

2665. SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering to distribute unpolished rice through the Public Distribution System;

(b) if not, whether several rice millers have declined to meet the specifications set by Ministry; and

(c) if so, the corrective measures taken to see that the consumers under PDS get polished rice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN) : (a) No Sir.

(b) Government of Punjab and Punjab Rice millers Association had represented to increase maximum limit of certain refractions of rice. This has not been found desirable in the interest of consumers.

(c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Implementation of Mumbai Urban Transport Project-II

2666. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have set up Mumbai Rail Vikas Corporation to implement Mumbai Urban Transport Project-II;

(b) if so, whether the Mumbai Rail Vikas Corporation has started functioning;

(c) if so, the steps taken to mobilise funds to execute the corporation;

(d) whether there is any proposal to take loan from the World Bank to implement the MUTP-II; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The certificate for incorporation of Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation (MRVC), as a Government company with the registrar of Companies has been obtained. Further action is on hand to get the certificate for commencement of business from the Registrar of Companies.

- (c) The funds for the project will be provided through:
- (i) Commercial utilisation of railway land and air space;
 - (ii) Surcharge to be levied on commuters;
 - (iii) Capital from the General Exchequer to Indian Railways;
 - (iv) Budgetary Support from the Government of Maharashtra;
 - (v) Borrowings to be decided with mutual consent of Government of Maharashtra and Indian Railways.

(d) and (e) Discussions are under way with the World Bank for funding the projects to be taken up under Mumbai Urban Transport Project-II (MUTP-II).

Railway Projects in West Bengal

2667. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI:
SHRI SUNIL KHAN:
SHRI ANIL BASU:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the surveys being conducted for the construction and conversion of railway lines in West Bengal;

(b) the time by which these surveys are likely to be completed;

(c) whether the Government have received any fresh proposal to conduct survey for construction/conversion of railway lines in West Bengal; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Lok Sabha.

[Translation]

Encroachment of Railway Land

2668. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether encroachers are being removed from the Railways' land at Katihar Junction under North-east Frontier Railway;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to construct railway quarters on the vacated land so as to prevent encroachments in future; and

(c) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. Vacated Railway land shall be used for development works.

[English]

Status of "Aditya"

2669. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the construction of fleet replenishment tanker (FRT) "Aditya" at Garden Reach Ship Builders and Engineers Ltd. has been completed and inducted into the navy after trials;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons for delay and the time by which it is likely to be inducted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) A Statment is enclosed.

Statement

Construction of FRT "Aditya" has almost been completed and has achieved a progress of 97%. The ship proceeded for sea trials on two occasions during August - September, 1999. The defects noticed during the trials are being attended to in consultation with the original designer of the ship. Further trials/works relating to satisfactory functioning of its systems and the balance sea trials will be undertaken over the next three months. The ship is expected to be delivered to the Indian Navy in March 2000 after successful completion of these trials.

Import of Edible Oils

2670. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:
SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the total quantum of edible oils imported during each of the last three years;

(b) the names of countries from which such imports were made alongwith the terms and conditions thereof;

(c) the justification of importing such a huge quantum of edible oils;

(d) whether the Government have neglected to encourage edible oil manufactures to boost their production; and

(e) if so, the steps the Government propose to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) The total quantity of the edible oils imported during the last 3 years i.e. 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 has been 12.83 Lakh Tonnes, 18.93 Lakh Tonnes and 33.37 Lakh Tonnes respectively. The information for the year 1998-99 is based on the returns received from the importers till 13-12-1999.

(b) Imports have been made under OGL from countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, Argentina, USA, Brazil etc.

(c) As a supplemental measure to bridge the gap between demand and availability of edible oils, the Government has had to allow import of edible oils under OGL so as to ensure their adequate availability of edible oils at reasonable prices in the domestic market.

(d) Because of the shortage of raw materials, the Government has allowed the import of oilseeds and oils to meet the requirement of the Vegetable oil industry as also of the consumers.

(e) Some of steps taken by the Government to augment the availability of raw materials (Oilseeds & Oils) are:

- (i) A Technology Mission on Oilseeds was under implementation in 25 States covering 395 selected district. Under the Programme, financial assistance is being provided by way of subsidies on various critical inputs like production and distribution of seed, mini kits, rhizobium culture, gypsum/pyrite, improved farm implements, plant protection equipments, sprinkler sets etc. In addition, frontline and general demonstrations are organised on farmer's field to transfer the production technology. The programme is being funded on 75 : 25 share basis between the Central Government and the State Government. During the year 1999-2000, an amount of Rs. 109.10 Crores has been provided as Central share for implementation of the programme.

During the Ninth Plan, the new initiatives taken under the programme includes propagation of high yielding varieties of oilseeds, promotion of sprinkler irrigation, use of integrated nutrients and pest management and promoting the use of gypsum/pyrites as source of sulphur for increasing the production of oilseeds and edible oil in the country with higher outlay.

(ii) Intensification of research efforts for increasing production of oilseeds.

(iii) Increasing the areas under non-traditional oilseeds crops like soyabean and sunflower; exploitation of oilseeds of tree and forest origin, rice bran etc.

(iv) Setting up of necessary processing and infrastructural facilities to keep pace with the production programme of oilseeds.

(v) Assistance for oil palm development.

(vi) Better incentive to producers through fixation of Minimum Support Price (MSP) of major oilseeds.

(vii) Identification of equipments of modernisation of processing units, custom duty concessions on imports of certain equipments.

[Translation]

Passenger Amenities at Azamgarh Railway Station

2671. DR. BALIRAM : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Azamgarh and Jaunpur Railway Stations of Uttar Pradesh are lacking in civic amenities such as water, public toilets and retiring room; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government to provide all civic amenities at both the Railway Stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) Except the retiring room at Azamgarh, other facilities like water, toilet, etc. have already been provided at both the stations as per the existing norms. The provision of retiring room at Azamgarh has not been found justified on commercial considerations.

Speed to Trains

2672. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase the speed of Mail and Express Trains running between Delhi-Mumbai via Ratlam and Surat so as to cover this distance in short time; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) There is no such proposal at present.

(b) Does not arise.

*[English]***Appointment on Compassionate Ground**

2673. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases of appointments on compassionate ground are pending at present with the Railways, zone/division-wise;

(b) the reasons for delay; and

(c) the time by which all these cases are likely to be finalised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) The number of cases of appointments on compassionate ground pending at present with the Railways zone/division-wise (as on 31.10.99) are as under:

Railway	Division	Number of Compassionate Appointment cases pending (as on 31.10.1999)
1	2	3
CENTRAL	Mumbai	64
	Bhusawal	71
	Jhansi	110
	Jabalpur	13
	Nagpur	33
	Solapur	19
	Bhopal	21
	Others	155
	Total :	486
	EASTERN	Howrah
Sealdah		71
Asansol		64
Dhanbad		70
Danapur		138
Mughalsarai		42
Malda		30
Others		55
Total :	522	
NORTHERN	Bikaner	08
	Allahabad	25

1	2	3
	Delhi	68
	Firozpur	19
	Jodhpur	NIL
	Lucknow	43
	Moradabad	33
	Ambala	29
	Others	106
	Total :	331
NORTH -	Izzatnagar	97
EASTERN	Lucknow	108
	Varanasi	83
	Sonepur	195
	Samastipur	134
	Others	64
	Total :	681
NORTH-EAST	Katihar	251
FRONTIER	Allpurduar	272
	Lumding	195
	Tinsukia	70
	Others	76
	Total :	864
SOUTHERN	Chennai	754
	Trichy	127
	Madhurai	88
	Trivandrum	50
	Palghat	76
	Bangalore	192
	Mysore	28
	Others	345
	Total :	1660
SOUTH -	Secunderabad	212
CENTRAL	Hyderabad	188
	Vijayawada	340
	Guntakal	373
	Hubli	194
	Others	38
	Total :	1345

1	2	3
SOUTH-	Adra	62
EASTERN	Bilaspur	38
	Chakradharpur	52
	Kharagpur	136
	Nagpur	26
	Waltair	160
	Sambalpur	05
	Khurda	205
	Others	71
	Total :	755
WESTERN	Mumbai	53
	Baroda	79
	Ratlam	84
	Kota	70
	Ajmer	92
	Rajkot	67
	Jaipur	57
	Bhavanagar	24
	Others	92
		Total :
PRODUCTION UNITS		
Chittaranjan Locomotive Works		58
Diesel Component Works		02
Diesel Locomotive Works		01
Integral Coach Factory		30
Rail Coach Factory		Nil
Wheel and Axle Plant		03
Total :		94
Grand Total :		7356

(b) Delay in making compassionate appointment occur due to various reasons like wards being minor, non-availability of suitable vacancies, legal cases pending in Courts, time barred cases, etc.

(c) Instructions have been issued and reiterated from time to time to make all out efforts to provide compassionate appointments to the eligible candidates as early as possible within the guidelines laid down for the purpose. It is, however, difficult to fix any time limit for the appointment on compassionate grounds as there are many factors not attributable to the Railway Administration which may cause delays.

Joint Venture with Private Sector

2674. DR. V. SAROJA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation is likely to enter into joint ventures and strategic alliances with the private sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the equity of this Corporation would be sold in the market; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Details are still to be worked out.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Allocation of Funds under Swarn Jayanti Swarozgar Yojana

2675. SHRI P.D. ELANGOVAN:
SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY:
SHRI SUNIL KHAN:

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the funds allocated under the Swarn Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana for the year 1999-2000, State-wise; and

(b) the targets fixed and achieved under the Yojana, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA) : (a) and (b) The State-wise details of funds allocated under Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY) during 1999-2000 and achievements under the Yojana during 1999-2000 (up to October,99) are given in enclosed Statement. Physical targets are not fixed under SGSY.

Statement*State-wise details of Funds Allocated, Released and Achievement under SGSY during 1999-2000*

(Rs. in Lakh)

Sl. No.	STATES/U.T.	Central Allocation	Total Allocation	Central Releases (Upto date)	Total Funds Utilised	Total Credit Target	Total Credit Mobilised	Total No. of Swarozgaris Assisted	Reporting Month
1	Andhra Pradesh	5201.63	6935.51	2600.81	869.44	21600.00	1248.39	11125	6
2	Arunachal Pradesh	114.36	152.48	38.80	11.63	880.00	8.50	81	5
3	Assam	2971.57	3962.09	1485.79	886.30	7000.00	422.01	4512	10
4	Bihar	17039.96	22719.95	2893.29	4590.26	51000.00	2961.07	28522	8
5	Goa	50.00	66.67	25.00	64.60	170.00	26.67	302	10
6	Gujarat	1957.99	2610.65	979.00	134.36	7500.00	83.98	566	5
7	Haryana	1151.92	1535.89	575.96	R.A.	4200.00	R.A.	N.A.	
8	Himachal Pradesh	485.12	646.83	242.56	74.19	2000.00	217.50	785	8
9	Jammu & Kashmir	600.40	800.53	289.57	182.34	1800.00	186.55	1746	8
10	Karnataka	3927.97	5237.29	1871.47	857.60	14000.00	100.37	1419	10
11	Kerala	1762.47	2349.96	881.24	225.48	7000.00	214.86	1434	10
12	Madhya Pradesh	8637.11	11516.15	4318.56	1886.92	31500.00	1150.14	7036	10
13	Maharashtra	7764.63	10352.84	3882.32	2231.70	28500.00	3995.00	27671	10
14	Manipur	199.21	265.61	@	R.A.	500.00	R.A.	R.A.	
15	Meghalaya	223.19	297.59	31.39	75.02	600.00	69.43	741	8
16	Mizoram	51.65	68.87	25.82	1.00	200.00	R.A.	R.A.	5
17	Nagaland	153.10	204.13	76.55	R.A.	400.00	R.A.	R.A.	
18	Orissa	5949.60	7932.80	4695.20	800.44	20700.00	681.19	5519	10
19	Punjab	559.82	746.43	279.91	153.48	2000.00	88.84	607	9
20	Rajasthan	2982.64	3976.85	1358.62	R.A.	14000.00	R.A.	R.A.	
21	Sikkim	57.18	76.24	28.59	9.41	230.00	1.57	11	5
22	Tamilnadu	4599.38	6132.51	2299.70	207.60	18000.00	28.20	4075	9
23	Tripura	359.69	479.59	179.84	3.00	1100.00	R.A.	R.A.	4
24	Uttar Pradesh	18752.62	25003.49	8549.88	725.35	65000.00	R.A.	1618	10
25	West Bengal	6611.79	8815.72	232.19	2066.95	20000.00	3614.26	38231	9
26	A & N Islands	50.00	50.00	12.50	9.46	125.00	4.21	56	8
27	D & N Haveli	50.00	50.00	@	2.34	125.00	R.A.	R.A.	8
28	Daman & Diu	50.00	50.00	@	6.25	120.00	0.83	5	8
29	Lakshadweep	50.00	50.00	@	0.55	125.00	R.A.	R.A.	10
30	Pondicherry	50.00	50.00	25.00	5.00	125.00	R.A.	R.A.	7
Total		92415.00	123136.66	37879.53	16080.66	320500.00	15104.53	136062	

R.A. = REPORT AWAITED.

N.B. : @ CENTRAL FUNDS COULD NOT BE RELEASED DUE TO NON-FULFILMENT OF CONDITIONS.

Eviction of Army from Red Fort

2676. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to evict army from the Red Fort in New Delhi; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) There are no plans at present to remove the Army units out of the Red Fort in Delhi, as their presence there is necessary to perform their assigned role in the Red Fort area. Besides, re-location of Army units at new site will entail provision of additional land in Delhi and considerable expenditure.

Catering and Tourism Corporation

2677. SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to corporatise the entire catering and tourism network of Indian Railways by setting up of Railway Catering and Tourism Development Corporation (RCTDC);

(b) if so, the details thereof and the progress made in this regard so far;

(c) whether any agreement has been entered into with the Railway workers unions for absorption of railway staff working in these units;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the manner in which the Government propose to protect the interests of workers engaged in these units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) It is only proposed to corporatise some of the catering and tourism activities both at present and in future.

(b) to (e) Indian Railways Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd. has been registered on 27.9.99 as a government company under the Companies Act 1956 with an Authorised Capital of Rs. 50 crores. An amount of Rs. 5 crores has been earmarked in the current year towards government contribution in the corporation.

The objectives of the corporation include upgrading and managing some of the existing and future catering services of Indian Railways, developing rail tourism and marketing of passenger related value added services.

The transfer of some of the activities from Indian Railways to Indian Railways Catering & Tourism Corporation Ltd. will be done in stages under a phased programme fully taking care of the interests of labour.

Rehabilitation of Encroachers

2678. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to rehabilitate the encroachers upon railway land who were there for long years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the occupants of such railway land are being evicted without giving any prior notice, particularly in South Eastern railway; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) New encroachments are removed as soon as noticed. Regarding other encroachments, action is taken under the provisions of the Public Premises (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1971 which provides for sufficient notice at various stages of hearing.

Theft of Steel Plates from Naval Laboratory

2679. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:
SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a 20-tonne consignment of high-grade steel plates, used in building ships and submarines, has disappeared sometime back from the high-security naval dockyard, Mumbai, which is guarded round the clock by the elite Defence Security Corps of the Ministry of Defence;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the outcome of the inquiry held in that regard; and

(c) the follow-up action taken against the persons found responsible?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) 13 tonnes of naval steel plates meant for testing and trial purposes for a project taken up by Naval Materials Research Laboratory, Mumbai for development of steel to be used for ships and submarines was stolen from the premises of Naval Dockyard, Mumbai.

(b) Loss of the steel plates was reported to the Mumbai Police. Investigations revealed that these steel plates were

stolen by the Garbage Contractor of Naval Dockyard. Based on the information provided by the Garbage Contractor, the items were recovered from a scrap dealer and the Police arrested two employees of Bombay Dockyard, who were produced before and Court and later released on bail.

(c) The steel sheets have been finally recovered. The case is pending before the Hon'ble 37 Esplanade Court at Mumbai.

Indian Troops to East Timor

2680. SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering an Indonesian proposal to send its troops to keep the peace in East Timor;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total contingent of Indian forces deputed or proposed to be deputed to East Timor for the peace keeping measure?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) There is no proposal for contribution of Indian troops to the UN Peace keeping mission in East Timor.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[Translation]

Launching of special 'Family Journey Scheme'

2681. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH:
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:
DR. ASHOK PATEL:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Air India propose to launch a special 'Family-Journey Scheme' (Parivar Yatra Yozana) for Government officers;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which this schmes is likely to be launched?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

[English]

Power through Non-Conventional Energy Sources

2682. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA:
DR. V. SAROJA:

Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of power produced through non-conventional energy of the total power production as on December, 1999 in the country, State-wise;

(b) the comparative cost of the power production of each unit by conventional and non-conventional energy sources at present; and

(c) the efforts made to increase power production from non-conventional energy sources during 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN) : (a) The total installed capacity of power projects based on non-conventional energy sources is about 1600 MW which is 1.67% of the total installed capacity in the country, as on 1st December 1999. The percentage of power produced through non-conventional energy sources in States such as Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram and Sikkim is quite high and varies from 58% to 24% mainly on account of high small hydro power capacities. For Tamil Nadu, it is 14% on account of high wind power installed capacity. In the other States, the percentages are quite low.

(b) The cost of power generation from non-conventional energy sources varies from Rs. 2 to Rs. 4 per unit depending upon the technology, location and taking into account the available incentives. The average cost of energy generated from new hydro power projects comes to Rs. 1.69 per unit; the cost for new thermal power projects is Rs. 2.25 to Rs. 3.78 per unit depending upon the location and type of fuel used; and, Rs. 1.51 per unit for nuclear power projects excluding return on equity and levies.

(c) A total capacity of about 132 MW was installed in different States during 1998-99 and an aggregate capacity of about 130 MW has been installed during 1999-2000, upto 1st December 1999. No state-wise targets are fixed. The projects are based on the potential, Central fiscal incentives and the policies announced by the States.

Performance of Shipyards

2683. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the performance of the public sector shipyards under the Ministry of Defence during the current year in physical and financial terms;

(b) whether these units attract orders for productivity as well as sustenance;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the action plan chalked out to make them profiteering?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK) : (a) to (d) There are three Public Sector Shipyards under the administrative control of the Ministry of Defence, viz. M/s Mazagon Dock Ltd, Mumbai, Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers, Ltd., Calcutta and Goa Shipyard Ltd., Goa. The Value of Production of these Shipyards upto 30 September 1999 was Rs. 539.64 crore. The physical performance is related to the target of production for the year in respect of each vessel under construction in different yards. All efforts are made to reach the targeted production during the year.

The orders for Defence Shipyards come from the Indian Navy, the Coast Guard and the civil sector. In order to ensure long term sustainability of capacity created in these Shipyards a medium term Perspective Plan has been prepared for each Shipyard. The plans for modernisation, human resource development, adequate utilisation of capacity, etc. have been incorporated in these Perspective Plans.

Recommendations of National Tourism Committee

2684. SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the recommendations made by the National Tourism Committee headed by Late Muhammad Yunus to examine the working of the National Tourist Organisation as well as travel industry;

(b) whether the Government have implemented all the recommendations; and

(c) if not, the time by which the recommendations are likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARTI) : (a) to (c) The details of the main recommendations of the National Tourism Committee along with status of implementation are given in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

The main recommendations of the National Committee on Tourism and the Government's decision in respect of them are as given below:

Sl. No.	Recommendations	Status of Implementation
1	2	3
1.	The State should concentrate on planning broad strategies of tourism development, provision of fiscal and monetary incentives to catalyse private sector investment and devising an effective regulatory and supervisory mechanism to protect the interests of the industry and the consumer.	The States plan their activities keeping the recommendations in view.
2.	A special session of the National Development Council should be convened to formulate a national tourism policy based on the recommendations of this Report.	Draft National Tourism Policy was prepared by the Ministry of Tourism in 1997 and is being finalised.
3.	In View of India's comparative advantage of having a wide variety of destinations of tourist interest, it is realistic to aim at a growth rate of 7 per cent per annum in the international tourist arrivals during the Eighth and Ninth Five Year Plans.	During the Ninth Five Year Plan a growth rate of 8% has been taken.
4.	For a balanced development of tourism in India, it is necessary to develop selected tourist circuits/centres, diversify tourism to India, develop non-traditional areas, restore and develop national heritage projects, explore new tourist generating markets, particularly in countries which have a broad spectrum of cultural affinity with India and launching special campaigns of "discover your roots".	The recommendation is the thrust of Tourism Development strategy being currently followed.

1	2	3
5.	Tourism has a potential for earning foreign exchange worth Rs. 4000 crores to Rs. 5000 crores by 2000 AD at 1986-87 prices. This amount can be increased further if the declining trend in per capita expenditure of foreign tourists is reversed.	Foreign Exchange Earnings have reached the level of Rs. 12,000 in 1998-99.
6.	There is also a high degree of seasonality in the occupancy rates, which is more pronounced in the case of foreign tourists. If the objective of maximising foreign exchange earnings is to be achieved, these seasonal peaks and troughs have to be reduced by measures like off-season tariffs, etc.	Appropriate measures have been taken.
7.	A package of incentives has been recommended which will provide the desired stimulus for investment in this sector. These include a series of monetary incentives which will ease the borrowing the repayment of loans fiscal incentives to improve the profitability and operational input incentives for greater efficiency in operations and management.	Incentives have been provided to the extent possible.
8.	A Tourism Finance Corporation with an initial equity of Rs. 100 crores should also be set up to provide loans to the tourism industry and cater to its specialised needs.	Tourism Finance Corporation has been set up.
9.	Supplementary accommodation like private guest houses, tourist bungalows, forest lodges, etc., which provides lodgings to a large segment of tourists should be encouraged through suitable incentives. It is comparatively less expensive to build, and also provides employment and additional income to the people.	Being exploited.
10.	Anti-poverty and area development programmes should be integrated with tourism development in those areas which have high tourism potential. This will provide the local people with employment and supplementary income.	Is being done.
11.	Old havelies, palaces, villas, etc. should be put to gainful use as they provide a low cost route for augmenting accommodation.	Is being done
12.	The travel trade coordinates different components of the tourist product to create a package or a service, thereby helping to earn foreign exchange. As such, the industry needs to be given selected fiscal and monetary incentives which are already available to the export industry.	Various incentives to the extent possible have been given to the industry.
13.	We should launch a national image-building and marketing plan in key markets by pooling resources of the various public and private agencies. This would yield abundant fall out for tourism growth and also be of advantage in trade and commerce.	Publicity campaign in important markets has been stepped-up.
14.	There is an urgent need to professionalise our approach in respect of marketing activities. We should overhaul our tourist offices abroad and strengthen a few selected offices on the basis of the marketing plan, provide adequate resources and post officers with a strong marketing orientation.	Review of over-seas offices is being done from time to time.
15.	While devising a marketing plan, a factor often overlooked is the element of seasonality in our tourism product. The winter months are ideal for sight-seeing activities in the plains, whereas in the remaining months, the high temperature precludes much of this	Off season promotional efforts have been taken up.

1

2

3

activity. As things would have it, the winter months coincide with the winter in Europe, traditionally low tourist season in this region. We should, therefore, explore the potential in countries of southern hemisphere. We should also look into the possibility of developing an alternative tourist season during the monsoon months especially in peninsular India. The climate at this time to the year is moderate and, above all, this period coincides with the tourist season in Europe.

16. To give the travel trade a competitive edge in its marketing effort, a Market Development Fund should be set-up with the express purpose of promoting tourism. The corpus of the Fund and the modalities of its operation have been spelt out in the Report.
17. A major ingredient of tourist facilitation is information service. Though invisible, it is invaluable to tourists. The absence of an up-to-date information system with quick retrieval facilities leads to poor tourist facilitation. The technological developments in the field of communications and computers should, therefore, be profitably utilised for establishing a Tourist Information Network.
18. Closely linked is the invaluable contribution of the food-cum-cultural festivals abroad to the build-up of interest in destination India. These have proved very popular with the foreigners. We feel that such promotional activities should become a regular feature at trade fairs and exhibitions abroad.
19. A major strength of the Indian tourism is its rich cultural heritage. A foreigner in India should be fully exposed to evening entertainment programmes that bring out the very best of our traditional music, dance, folklore, etc. Publicity generated from such programmes would have a tremendous spin-off effect. The Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with private entrepreneurs should catalyse development in this field.
20. The potential offered by the Conventions and Conferences business needs to be fully exploited. The present procedures for hosting the Conferences are dilatory, and we should adopt a 'single window' clearance concept.
21. Air-charters should be liberally allowed as long as the price to the total tour package is not less than the promotional fares applicable on scheduled air services to and from India.
22. Indian Airlines and Vayudoot should set-up separate directorate of tourism in their organisations for coordinating with other agencies.
23. Travel agencies should be provided terminals linked to the computerised reservation system of airlines and railways to facilitate ticketing, booking, etc.
24. Airports are literally gateways to the country. The efficiency and facilities provided by the airports from a lasting impression on the foreign tourist. Due to India's geographical position, night bunching of flights and peaking problems cause facilitation procedures be streamlined so that the time taken in completing the formalities is reduced to the minimum.

Assistance for Development of International Tourism (ADIT) scheme had been launched and operated for sometime.

TOURNET has been established.

Such festivals are being organised by ITDC. Jointly with Air India and State Governments.

Publicity on cultural programmes and festivals has been strengthened.

Emphasis is being placed on convention and conference tourism.

The policy has been liberalised and the chartered flights can now land at several air ports.

They have separate officers designated for co-ordination.

Major Travel agencies avail the facility.

Procedures have been streamlined.

1	2	3
25. The train "Palace-on-Wheels" should be air-conditioned and refurbished in a "period" style. The Great "Indian Rover". Tourist train should be reintroduced for the Buddhist circuit.		Implemented.
26. The Ministry of Railways should have a full-fledged tourism directorate for coordinating with other agencies.		The Ministry of Railways have a tourism cell.
27. Adequate attention needs to be given for upgrading road transportation facilities in important tourist centres. Four lane highways and motorways with suitable mid-way facilities should be developed, initially in the Delhi-Agra-Jaipur triangle in the North, Madras-Bangalore-Mysore in the South, and Calcutta-Puri-Konark in the East.		Four laning of the important tourists routes like Delhi-Agra-Jaipur and Calcutta-Bhubaneswar has been introduced.
28. The Secretariat and operational wings of the Ministry of Tourism should be reorganised on the pattern of the Railway Board. In the new set-up, there is no need to maintain the present segregated identities of the Ministry and Director General's Office.		No decision to reorganise the Ministry of Tourism has been taken.
29. A specialised management cadre for tourism called the Indian Tourism Service should be constituted. Such a cadre would have the advantage of equipping the personnel with an in depth knowledge and experience of dealing with tourism as a national activity. Lateral induction of personnel should be made at appropriate levels to impart dynamism to the system.		-do-
30. The role of India Tourism Development Corporation should be redefined as an umbrella body for tourism industry in the country. This autonomous body to be called the "National Tourism Development Corporation" should have 50 per cent joint venture interests in all States. As a developmental role, it should continue to pave the way for tourism in the areas where private sector is wary to invest.		It has not been found feasible to implement.
31. The Hotel Corporation of India should be merged with the National Tourism Development Corporation. Such a set-up would ensure coordinated operations and a more extensive and well-integrated accommodation network. At the same time, the loss-making HCI, functioning on economies of scale would start making profits.		-do-
32. A Standing Committee of Tourism Ministers should be constituted to provide an integrated approach to tourism development and also effectively associate the State Government in this process.		State Tourism Ministers Conference is held annually for this purpose.
33. The capacity and the number of institutions both at the craft and diploma levels, should be increased.		The capacity and the number of institutions have been increased. The number of Hotel Management Institutes has increased from 12 in 1988 to 21 in 1998. The total number of Food Craft Institutes has increased from 12 in 1988 to 14 in 1998.
34. The intake of the apprentices under the statutory Apprenticeship Act should be increased.		Necessary guidelines in the matter have been issued.
35. The quality of the training programmes and that of the teaching should be improved. The former by restructuring the programmes and the later by lateral induction of suitable staff and by "retraining the trainers".		Implemented.

1	2	3
36.	Universities should be encouraged to introduce tourism oriented courses. Leading management institutions like the Indian Institutes of Management should have separate departments of Hospitality and Institution Management that address themselves to the unique management needs of the burgeoning needs of the service industry.	A few universities have introduced MTA and PGDDM.
37.	The management departments of the universities and IIMs as well as Hotel Management Institutes should offer modular management programmes and part time/evening programmes.	Part time courses are being run by some of the Institutes.
38.	In order to provide students with an exposure to the industry as well as the practical experience, these institutes should run commercially viable restaurants and cake shops which generate sufficient income to meet their running costs.	Most of the institutions run commercially viable restaurants and cake shops.
39.	The Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management should be reconstituted by a Resolution of the government and accorded the status of a recognised educational institute, and be empowered to award diplomas/degrees.	The IITTM awards its own diplomas.
40.	Continuing education should be part of the activity of IITTM. Short duration programmes for updating the knowledge and skills of those employed at grass roots and supervisory levels should be organised by the Institute. It should also develop resource material for training of personnel in various skills. Career counseling should be one of the important functions of the Institute.	The institute is running short duration programmes and several other programmes of continuing education in tourism. Career counseling is being carried out at the institute.
41.	Carrying capacity of each area in which tourism is sought to be promoted need be assessed and assessment techniques based on use of systems analysis be evolved.	Studies are taken up in centres where such problems are anticipated.
42.	Based on the above assessments, tourism plans will have to be developed for each area.	Master Plans for tourism developments at major tourist centres are being developed.
43.	Non-governmental organisations especially ecological and adventure groups have an important role to play and their services should be availed of.	Non-Governmental organisations are generally being involved.
44.	To ensure implementation of the recommendations, a national policy needs to be evolved and backed by a comprehensive legislation.	The Draft National Policy was formulated in 1997. It is being finalised.

Tourist Office at Sydney

2685. DR. LAXMI NARAYAN PANDEY : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has got its office at Sydney headed by a Director;

(b) if so, the total monthly expenditure being incurred to run the said office; and

(c) the total number of tourists visited India from Australia during 1997, 1998 and current year as on 31st October, 1999?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARTI) : (a) A Government of India Regional Tourist Office headed by a Regional Director is located in Sydney (Australia).

(b) The average monthly expenditure (excluding salaries) on running this office is Rs. 4 lakhs (approximately).

(c) Tourist arrivals from Australia to India are as under:

Year	Tourist Arrival
1997	50,847
1998	57,807
1999 (upto July, 1999)	34,215

Rural Employment

2686. DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have achieved any success to provide rural employment through Wasteland Development; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of persons benefited therefrom, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI A. RAJA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Department of Land Resources is implementing an Integrated Wastelands Development Project (IWDP) Scheme for development of non-forest wastelands on watershed basis. Under this scheme, various land based activities are carried out such as afforestation, silvipasture development, pasture development, horticulture, distribution of seedlings, in situ soil and moisture conservation etc. These activities provide employment opportunities in rural areas. Under this scheme, 247 projects have been sanctioned in the country at a total cost of Rs. 778.15 crores for the development of 15.98 lakh ha. of wastelands upto March, 1999. The persons who are living in or around the project area are provided wage employment for the execution of these projects.

[Translation]

Signalling System

2687. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether signalling system is backbone of the Railways;

(b) if so, the number of such stations in each zone where the signalling gear has outlived its life span and remains out of order frequently thus causing serious rail accidents; and

(c) the steps taken to improve the signalling system?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The number of stations, zone wise, where signalling gears have completed their codal life are as follows:

Railway	No. of stations due for replacement
Central	68
Eastern	403
Northern	486
North-eastern	170
North-east Frontier	148
Southern	222
South Central	227
South Eastern	412
Western	254
Total	2390

The signalling gears at all these stations are being intensively maintained and do not remain out of order frequently. No serious rail accident has taken place at any of these stations on this account.

(c) Progressive replacement of signalling system are being carried out on age-cum-condition basis within the available financial resources. The work of replacement of signalling systems have been sanctioned at 487 stations and are in various stages of completion.

[English]

Construction of Yatri Niwas

2688. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways propose to construct Yatri Niwas in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, place-wise; and

(c) the steps proposed to provide and upgrade rail facilities in Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. 100 locations of tourism oriented stations have been identified for the construction of Budget Hotels/Rail Yatri Niwas on all Indian Railways. Three Rail Yatri Niwas at Howrah, New Delhi and Gorakhpur are already functioning.

(c) Provision and upgradation of amenities is continuous process. However, District-wise information is not maintained on Railways.

Salary Revision of Re-Employed Defence Personnel

2689. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether retired defence service officers who are reappointed after retirement as Major, Lt. Col., retain their respective ranks but draw the salary of a captain;

(b) whether the Fifth Pay Commission over-looked the question of re-fixation of salary of these re-employed service officers and thus they were allowed to continue with their old salaries, which is much below the salary of a present day captain;

(c) if so, the steps being taken to rationalise, revise and update the salaries of these re-employed officers; and

(d) the other terms of service prescribed for them?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) The pay of Defence Service officers on re-employment after retirement, is determined in the following manner: Pay is fixed at the same stage as pay drawn at the time of retirement, without rank pay. In addition, the rank pay of the rank in which he is re-employed is allowed. On the pay thus arrived, Dearness Allowance is given and from the gross salary pension is deducted, which they continue to draw separately without Dearness Relief.

Defence Service officers of the rank of Colonel/Lt. Colonel are re-employed in the lower ranks of Major/Captain only; but they are allowed to wear the ranks they held at the time of their retirement. The Fifth Central Pay Commission (CPC) had recommended that retiring officers should be re-employed in the same rank in which they retire. However, Government, in consultation with the Service HQs, have not implemented this recommendation as it will adversely affect the promotional avenues of serving officers. As on date, re-employed officers are being paid salary as per the existing method of pay fixation as above, under which a Colonel/Lt. Colonel re-employed in the post of a Major/Captain draws more pay and allowances than that drawn by a Captain even at the maximum of his pay scale.

The matter regarding revision of pay fixation formula for re-employed Defence Service officers, in the light of revision of pay scales of Service officers on the basis of the recommendations of the Fifth CPC, is under active consideration of Government and is likely to be finalised soon.

The conditions of service governing re-employed officers are given in Special Army Instruction I/S/80 as amended from time to time. Such officers must not be over 53 years of age on date of re-employment. No re-employed officer will be retained beyond 56 years of age. Regular Army officers who retired in substantive rank of Colonel and below are eligible for maximum period of 3 years and minimum period of 2 years in first instance. Officers except substantive Colonels, may be initially re-employed in the substantive rank which they held at time of retirement. They may also be re-employed in that rank in a post tenable in lower ranks, with their consent. Retired substantive Colonels other than those belonging to Army Medical Corps (AMC) may also be similarly re-employed in their substantive ranks in a post tenable in the lower ranks, with their consent. Above mentioned officers should meet specified medical criteria for re-employment.

[Translation]

Production and Crushing capacity of Sugar Mills

2690. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:
SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN:
SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA:
SHRI CHANDRA VIJAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the crushing capacity of the sugar mills, State-wise;

(b) whether the existing sugar mills have adequate crushing capacity for crushing the whole quantity of the sugarcane produced particularly in Maharashtra;

(c) if not, the action plan proposed to be formulated by the Union Government to ensure crushing of the whole quantity of sugarcane produced; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) A Statement showing the State-wise installed daily cane crushing capacity (Tonnes) of sugar mills in the country is enclosed.

(b) to (d) The Sugar Cane is utilised by the sugar mills for production of sugar, Khandsari, Gur, Seed & Chewing purposes. The production of sugarcane in Maharashtra during the year 1999-2000, is estimated at 540.00 lakh tonnes, as against 435.41 lakh tonnes during the last year, 1998-99. Maximum quantity of sugarcane crushed by the sugar mills in Maharashtra was 514.57 lakh tonnes during the sugar season 1995-96. Thereafter, additional capacity of the order of 9,258 lakh tonnes has been created in the State. With the present installed capacity of 49.12 lakh tonnes, it is expected that the entire sugarcane available for

crushing would be consumed by the sugar mills of the Cooperative and Joint Sectors of the State.

Further, the sugar industry has been delicensed & thus the existing sugar mills are free to expand their capacities and entrepreneurs are also free to set up new sugar mills as per the techno-economic viability of their project and maintaining a distance of 15 Kms. from existing sugar factories.

Statement

State-wise installed daily cane crushing capacity (in tonnes) of Sugar Mills in the country

(As on 30-9-1999)

Daily cane crushing capacity (tonnes)

Sl. No.	State	Total
1.	Punjab	44766
2.	Haryana	30300
3.	Rajasthan	3766
4.	Uttar Pradesh	335474
5.	Madhya Pradesh	12325
6.	Gujarat	57600
7.	Maharashtra	284307
8.	Bihar	45950
9.	Assam	3313
10.	Orissa	12919
11.	West Bengal	1850
12.	Nagaland	1000
13.	Andhra Pradesh	86470
14.	Karnataka	88755
15.	Tamil Nadu	87450
16.	Pondicherry	2750
17.	Kerala	1524
18.	Goa	1250
Total		1101769

Kargil Fund

2691. SHRI VIJAY GOEL : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise details of total amount collected in the Prime Minister's Relief Fund and Army's Central Welfare Fund for the martyrs of Kargil operation;

(b) the funds out of that released to the families of martyrs so far and the time by which rest of the fund is likely to be released;

(c) whether Chief Minister of some States and National Presidents of some Political Parties had also collected funds for this purpose;

(d) if so, the details thereof and whether all of them have deposited the same in Prime Minister's Relief Fund and Army's Central Welfare Fund; and

(e) if not, the names of such Chief Ministers and Party Presidents and the reasons for not depositing the funds?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) A sum of Rs. 446.24 Crores has been collected in the National Defence Fund till 06/12/99. A sum of Rs. 201 Crores has been collected in the Army Central Welfare Fund. State wise details of collection are not available. A sum of Rs. 46.25 Crores has been released from National Defence Fund. A sum of Rs. 198.10 Crores has been released/earmarked for planned allocation from the Army Central Welfare Fund. The rest of the funds will be released as and when the situation warrants.

(c) to (e) Ministry of Defence do not have any information about the collection of funds made by the Chief Ministers of some states and National Presidents of some political parties. Some donations have been received in the National Defence Fund and Army Central Welfare Fund through the Chief Ministers of some states. Ministry of Defence do not have any information about the funds, if any, not deposited by any agency or organisation.

Construction of Pit Lines at Katihar Railway Station

2692. SHRI NIKHIL KUMAR CHOUDHARY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the pit lines have not been constructed in proportion to the number of trains at Katihar Junction under Northeast Frontier Railway for upkeep and maintenance of long distance trains;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the time by which the pit lines are likely to be constructed;

(c) whether the Government propose to construct a new foot over bridge at Katihar Junction as the old wooden foot over bridge is in a dilapidated condition; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be constructed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) Katihar has one pit line which has become saturated due to gradual introduction of new trains. A second pit line has, therefore,

been sanctioned and its construction is in progress. This new pit line is likely to be constructed by the end of the year 2000.

(c) No, Sir. Old wooden bridge is not in use and a new foot over bridge has already commissioned in 1997.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Status of 'Pinaka' Rocket System

2693. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the performance of the multi-barrel Rocket System "PINAKA" during Kargil operation;

(b) the stage at which the production of the indigenous "PINAKA" rocket system stands at present;

(c) the reasons attributed for the delay in commissioning it; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be inducted in the Army?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) A single barrel launcher of the PINAKA System was deployed, on experimental basis, during the Kargil operation.

(b) to (d) The PINAKA System was offered for user trials to the Army in October, 1999. A decision to productionise the System is to be taken only after it has been accepted by the Army. The delay in the development of the System and its subsequent user trials is attributable to: (i) time taken in solving unanticipated problems in establishment of new state of the art technologies, (ii) set back in initial flight trials; and (iii) unexpectedly longer time taken for the manufacture of sub-assemblies.

[Translation]

New Aircraft for Indian Airlines

2694. SHRI VIJAY GOEL:
SHRI RAJAJIAH MALYALA:
SHRI DILIPUKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI:
SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number and category of aircraft in the fleet of Indian Airlines at present and since these are in the possession of Indian Airlines;

(b) whether this number is adequate;

(c) if not, whether Indian Airlines is contemplating to procure new aircrafts; and

(d) if so, the number of aircraft required and the number of aircraft proposed to be procured during the next five years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) The number and category of aircraft in the fleet of Indian Airlines at present and period of arrival of these aircraft are as under:

Type of Aircraft	Fleet	Period of arrival
A-300	9*	1976-1982
B-737	12	1980-1982
DO-228	3	1984-1986
A-320	30	1989-1994
Total	54	

* Excluding two A-300 aircraft on lease.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Indian Airlines has submitted a project report for induction of six ATR-42 aircraft.

A Techno Economic evaluation study to replace the ageing fleet of B-737 and A-300 aircraft in Indian Airlines is also currently underway. On completion of the study, necessary action will be taken according to the prescribed procedure. No time frame, however, can be fixed at this stage.

Train Accident at Jamnagar

2695. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a train accident occurred on May 3, 1999 near Lalpur railway station in Jamnagar district of Gujarat;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the number of persons killed/injured and value of Government property damaged therein;

(d) the amount of compensation paid or likely to be paid to the families of the deceased;

(e) whether any enquiry has been conducted in this regard; and

(f) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (f) Do not arise.

Compensation by Konkan Railway

2696. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of farmers whose land was acquired for Konkan Railway Project, particularly in Raigarh district of Maharashtra;

(b) the amount of compensation paid to the affected farmers alongwith the number of farmers who actually received it;

(c) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for rehabilitation of these affected farmers;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether there is any provision for providing jobs to the member of affected families;

(f) if so, the number of such persons to whom jobs have been provided and if not, the reasons therefor;

(g) whether the Government have reserved stalls on railway platforms for scheduled castes/scheduled Tribes/ other backward classes/handicapped/ Ex-servicemen/ affected families; and

(h) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) There are approximately 7750 farmers in Raigarh district of Maharashtra from whom land was acquired for Konkan Railway Project.

(b) Total compensation paid for the land acquired in Raigarh District is Rs. 2,84,96,316/-. Konkan Railway deposited the amount with Maharashtra Government who takes the responsibility of paying the compensation. The details of number of farmers who received the compensation is not available with the Railways, as the disbursing authority is the Maharashtra Government.

(c) As the farmers are adequately compensated, the question of rehabilitation does not arise.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) Konkan Railway Corporation gives preference in providing jobs (subject to availability of vacancies), to the persons who lost 100% of their land holdings. In all recruitments done earlier as also in allotment of tea stalls, book stalls, Konkan Railway Corporation gave preference to landlosers.

(f) 704 number of persons have been provided jobs on the basis of their being landlosers for the project. These include persons who have lost only part of their land holding

as the policy for giving jobs only to 100% landlosers was decided subsequently.

(g) Only landlosers have been given preference.

(h) 7 Nos. of tea-stalls, 2 Nos. of book-stalls and 7 Nos. of PCO's have been allotted to landlosers.

[English]

Railways to downgrade Coal, POL and Fertiliser priority

2697. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have decided to withdraw top movement priority accorded to Coal, POL and Fertilisers;

(b) if so, the main reasons therefor;

(c) whether the railways have decided to focus on non-core sectors such as piecemeal import/export cargo in containers; and

(d) if so, the other steps are being taken to improve the profitability of railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) At present about 95% of Railway's transport effort caters to the need of the core-sectors of the economy. In order to capture traffic being offered by the growing non-core-sectors Railways are promoting movement of those cargo which generally move in piecemeal through containers.

(d) Other steps taken by Railways to improve its profitability, includes *inter-alia*, further increase in productivity of assets by improving their reliability, introduction of new technology to bring down the cost of operation, development/ strengthening of connectivity with ports in order to capture the growing volume of traffic getting generated at the ports and proliferation of 'Engine-on-load' system to improve wagon utilisation.

Reduction in Air Fare

2698. SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of airways including the Jet airways had reduced air fares in the country;

(b) if so, whether these reduced rates have affected the functioning of the airlines almost all the airlines have been incurring losses; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) to (c) Competition in the airline market is a healthy trend which is good for the travellers. Fares are not regulated and airlines keep adjusting their fares as they perceive the market from time to time. The revenues of an airline are a product of passenger load factor and fares charged. A high fare does not necessarily ensure profitability. As per information available all domestic airlines are not sustaining losses.

[Translation]

Inclusion of name of children below five years in reservation list

2699. SHRI RAMPAL SINGH
SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to include the names of children below five years of age who travels with adult passengers, in the reservation list;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the final decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (c) Zonal Railways have been advised to store the data of the children below 5 years accompanying the passengers as under:

- (i) Name(s) of the child/children below the age of 5 years, who will be accompanying the passengers during the journey are being asked for in the requisition form submitted at the time of seeking reservation and will kept as record.
- (ii) Passengers are also being requested to give the name(s) of the child/children below the age of 5 years accompanying them in the train to the TTE/Train Conductor who will keep a note of this in the Reservation Chart.

[English]

Laying of New Railway Line

2700. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of new railway lines constructed/converted/doubled/electrified during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 so far, Zone-wise; and

(b) the expenditure incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) The details are as under:

Zone	Section	Length (Km.)
<i>New Lines</i>		
Central	Khajuri-Panlhar (of Guna-Etawah line)	82
South Eastern	Maneswar-Angul (of Talcher-Sambalpur line)	142
Eastern	Bongaon-Petrapole	8
<i>Gauge Conversion</i>		
North Eastern	Narkatiaganj-Gorakhpur	159
North Eastern	Indara-Phephana	55
Northeast Frontier	Mariani-Jorhat & Shiuser-Moranhat (Part of Lumding-Silchar gauge conversion project)	57
Southern	Tambaram-Trichy	303
Southern	Trichy-Dindigul	93
Southern	Yeshwantpur-Baiyyappanhalli	20
South Central	Sholapur-Hotgi (of Sholapur-Gadag gauge conversion project)	15
South Eastern	Babupet-Ballarshah (part of Gondia-Chandaport gauge conversion project)	11
Western	Morbi-Maliya-Miyana (part of Wnkaner-Maliya-Miyana gauge conversion project)	68
<i>Doubling</i>		
Central	Divi-Vasai (Phase-I)	11
Central	Hetampur-Gher	1
Central	Katni-Katni 'A' Cabin	3
Central	Nishatpura A & D Cabins	1
Eastern	Khana-Sainthia Ph-II	6.5
Eastern	Khana-Sainthia Ph.-III	6.5
Eastern	3rd line Dehri-On-Sone-Mughal Sarai 3 block sections	6
Eastern	Sahibganj-New Farakka-Malda	16
Northern	Ghaziabad-Hapur (Phase-I)	7

Zone	Section	Length (Km.)
Southern	Shoranur-Mangalore	48
Southern	Qullon-Trivandrum	27
Southern	Malur-Bangarpet	27
South Centrai	Rukmapur-Vikarabaci	30
South Eastern	Saragbundia-Korba	7
South Eastern	Rajatgarh-Nergundi	4
South Eastern	Raghunathpur-Rahama (part)	16
South Eastern	Akaltara-Naila	16
South Eastern	Raipur-Sarona	5
South Eastern	Gotlam-Vijaynagaram	6
Western	Kota-Gurla Chambal Bridge	1

RAILWAY ELECTRIFICATION

Zone	Section	Route Kilometres
EASTERN		
	<i>(Parts of Sitarampur-Mughalsarai Project)</i>	
	Nargunjoo-Jhajha	8
	Mokama-Fatuha	68
	Mughalsarai-Kuchhman	7
	Kiul Yard	05
	<i>(Part of Chanderpura Complex Project)</i>	
	Jerangdih-Phusro	9
SOUTH EASTERN		
	<i>(Parts of Bhubaneswar-Kotavalasa Project)</i>	
	Alamanda-Chipurupalli-Srikakulam Road	82
	Palasa-Tilaru	48
	Simhachalam Yard	8
	Srikakulam Road-Tilaru	20
	<i>(Parts of Bokaro-Barsuan Project)</i>	
	Radhagaon-Muri-Kita	64
	Purulia-Kotshila	36
	Rangra-Kiriburu	20
	Bondamunda Yard	8

Zone	Section	Route Kilometres
	<i>(Parts of Adra-Midnapur Project)</i>	
	Bheduasole-Chanrakona Road-Salbori	65
	<i>(Parts of Kharagpur-Bhubaneswar Project)</i>	
	Meramandoli-Talcher	16
	Hijli-Bakhrabad	24
	Bhadrak-Kendupada	16
NORTHERN		
	<i>(Parts of Delhi-Ambala-Ludhiana Project)</i>	
	Ambala-Chandigarh	42
	Sirhind-Morinda	24
	<i>(Parts of Lucknow-Kanpur Project)</i>	
	Unnao-Sonik	06

NORTHERN*(Part of Ambala-Mordabad Project)*

Saharanpur Station 2

(Part of Lucknow-Kanpur Project)

Kanpur Bridge-Unnao 14

SOUTHERN*(Part of Erode-Ernakulam Projects)*

Punkunnam-Chovvara 56

(b) During 1998-99 Rs. 390 cr., 774 cr., 450 cr. and 334 crore have been spent on New Lines, Gauge Conversion, Doubling and Railway Electrification works respectively. The expenditure for 1999-2000 will be known only after the accounts for 1999-2000 are closed at the end of the current financial year.

*[Translation]***Delhi Suburban Trains**

2701. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the condition of the Delhi suburban trains are very bad such as seats, window panes are broken and bulbs, tubes and fans in these trains are also not working; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) No, Sir. There are, however, instances of breakage/deficiency of window panes, damage to seats, non-working of fans, bulbs/tube lights in Delhi suburban trains. This is mainly on account of vandalism, theft and intensive utilisation.

(b) Maintenance and security arrangements are being tightened. In addition, to discourage theft, increasing use of materials such as Fibreglass Reinforced Plastic (FRP) type windows, compreg slats for seats etc. are being increasingly employed both during replacements and production stage.

[English]

Shortfall of Revenue

2702. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the Indian Railway have sought Rs. 1000 crores loan from the Government to meet the shortfall in financing the annual plan;

(b) if so, the sectors and zones where the shortfall is occurred;

(c) whether there has been an erosion in the total Capital Fund (CF) of the Railways due to mis-management; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to maintain fiscal efficiency in the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) In view of a possible shortfall in the resources of the Railways in the current year, Ministry of Finance has been approached for assistance. Loan is one of the suggested forms of assistance.

(b) Shortfall in earnings has so far occurred mostly on Western, South Eastern, Eastern, South Central and Southern Railways. In the other zones the trend of earnings is satisfactory. However, the overall position of resources is dependent upon the expenditure side also where increase is being faced on account of various factors.

(c) No, Sir. However, the Railways have had to take recourse to a sizeable withdrawal from the Railway Fund balances, including Capital Fund, to support the Plan outlay. This became necessary on account of increased expenditure on staff and pension after implementation of Vth Central Pay Commission's recommendations and also due to last year's loss in freight traffic.

(d) Some of the important steps taken by the Railways to maintain fiscal efficiency are as under:

1. Marketing efforts, including freight concessions, to capture additional freight traffic.
2. Drives against ticket-less travel.
3. Steps to improve earnings from parcel traffic.
4. Drive for realisation of outstanding dues.
5. Action initiated to mobilise resources through exploitation of railway land and air space, leasing of right of way for optic fibre cable communication, leasing of advertising rights at railways stations and on the rolling stock etc.
6. Zonal Railways have been instructed to effect savings in revenue expenditure to compensate for unavoidable post-budgetary increases such as revision of diesel prices, hike in power tariff, increased rates of certain allowances/incentive bonus etc.
7. Tight control over expenditure in areas such as fuel & power consumption, contractual payments, over time allowance, purchase of materials etc.
8. Austerity and economy measures in areas such as hospitality, publicity, advertisements, inaugural ceremonies, seminars & workshops, contingent office expenses etc.
9. Prioritisation of expenditure on works for better use of available resources.
10. Productive use of manpower.
11. Better utilisation of assets.
12. Improvement in inventory management.
13. Maximum realisation from sale of scrap.

[Translation]

Construction of Godown In Maharashtra

2703. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of godowns constructed or under construction in Pandharpur of Maharashtra alongwith their capacity;

(b) whether the Government propose to construct some more godowns in the State;

(c) if so, the details thereof location-wise; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN) : (a) Neither the Food Corporation of India (FCI) nor the Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) under this Ministry has constructed or has plans to construct godowns at Pandharpur Taluk in Maharashtra State.

(b) to (d) As FCI has a total storage capacity of 16.67 lakh MTs against the stock of 11.96 lakh MTs as on November 1, 1999 in Maharashtra State, it has no plans to construct more godowns in that State.

The CWC has plans to construct godowns at Akola, D'Node, Nagpur, Gondia and Amravati in the State of Maharashtra during 1999-2000.

[English]

Doubling and Electrification of Kharagpur-Khurda Road Rail Line

2704. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the doubling and electrification work on Kharagpur Khurda Road rail line has been going on for a long time;

(b) if so, the date on which the above works started and the extent of works completed so far alongwith the amount spent thereon; and

(c) the time by which the above works are likely to be completed and the estimated expenditure to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) The entire length of line from Kharagpur to Khurda Road is double, except from Kapilas Road to Barang, where the work of doubling from Nergundi to Cuttak (as part of the Nergundi-Cuttack-Raghunathpur doubling) alongwith the construction of 2nd bridges on the Mahanadi and Birupa has been taken up. The work of electrification is in progress from Kharagpur to Khurda Road including Talcher-Paradeep Line.

(b) (i) Work of doubling from Nergundi to Cuttak started in 1998-99. Physical progress achieved so far is 25% and expenditure incurred is Rs. 15.37 crore.

(ii) Work on the 2nd bridges over the Mahanadi and Birupa started in 1996-97. Soil investigation for both the bridges has been completed. For the Birupa bridge, design has been completed and tenders are under finalisation; and for the Mahanadi bridge, design is under finalisation.

(iii) Work of electrification from Kharagpur to Khurda Road including Talcher-Paradeep Line started in 1997-98. Physical progress achieved so far is 30% and expenditure incurred is Rs. 96.70 crore.

(c) (i) The estimated cost of Nergundi-Cuttack-Raghunathpur doubling is Rs. 119 crore and that of the construction of the 2nd bridges on the Mahanadi and Birupa is Rs. 107 crore. These works will be progressed and completed in the coming years as per the availability of resources.

(ii) The estimated cost of Kharagpur-Khurda Road electrification including Talcher-Paradeep Line is Rs. 323 crore and the work is likely to be completed by March, 2002.

Seizure of Rocket Launchers in Jammu and Kashmir

2705. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Army troops have unearthed a militant arms dump near the Line of Control in J & K and seized and big haul of weapons and pneumatic boat from the hideout located in the inhospitable and treacherous terrain in the frontier district of Kupwara;

(b) if so, the details of the rocket launchers etc. seized therefrom;

(c) whether a large dump of arms and ammunition is reported to have been dumped by the Pakistani forces in all over border areas; and

(d) if so, the preventive measures taken to ensure that the arms are not dumped in the LOC?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (d) The Army recovered the following items from a terrorist hideout on 23rd August 1999 near Kakua Gali in the Naugaum Sector:

(a) Boat Pneumatic (four seater)	01
(b) Disposable Rocket Launcher	06
(c) Rifle Grenades	100
(d) Hand Grenades	25
(e) Pipe Bombs	10
(f) Ammunition	20540 rounds
(g) Snow Tent	01
(h) Snow Clothing	04 sets
(i) Items to make IEDs	

All developments on the border are constantly monitored and appropriate measures are taken to frustrate attempts at misadventure on the part of our adversaries.

Monitoring System for Railway Safety

2706. SHRI BIKASH CHOWDHURY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any internal monitoring system in Indian Railways for auditing the safety organization;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) to (c) The Safety Organisation has been structured as a 3 tier organisation i.e. Ministry of Railways, Zonal Railways and Divisional level. In a sense the organisation performs a role similar to that of an internal audit on aspects concerning safety in train operations.

To ensure safety in train operations the organisation monitors training of staff during safety camps, refresher and promotional courses. In addition, the safety department organises periodical safety meetings and safety seminars. Pobicity through safety circulars, bulletins and safety posters is also being organised by Safety Organisation.

Transportation of Petro-Products

2707. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that less high-value petro-products are being offered as freight to the Railways in the fiscal year 1999-2000;

(b) if so, the reasons for oil companies shying away from the using the cheaper mode of rail transport;

(c) whether any concerted effort been made by the Railways to attract and retain high-value petro-products freight traffic;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether railways are unable to compete with the faster mode of road traffic for petro-products; and

(f) if so, the steps proposed to reverse this trend?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There has been a decline in the rail share with the commissioning of pipelines for most of POL products.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) With a view to create adequate capacity for rail movement of petroleum products and ensuring that diversion to road is stopped, the Railways have modified the policy of procurement of tank wagons. The Railways are now procuring 100% of the tank wagons on replacement account and 50% on incremental account.

A close co-ordination is maintained with the oil industry and Railways at all levels. Regular meetings are held between Oil Corporation Committee, Oil Industry and Railways to decide slate, linkages and movement of POL products by rail.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

Compensation Package for Gorkha Soldiers

2708. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have since decided that the Nepalese soldiers of Indian Army who sacrificed themselves to defend the Indian Nation during Kargil Operation are to be treated at par with the Indian soldiers in the matter of compensation package;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the number of Gorkhas killed during the Kargil conflict and the details of compensation paid to them so far?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) Next to Kins of the soldiers of the Indian Army of Nepalese origin killed in Kargil operation have been given the same compensation package which has been given to the Next of Kins of other soldiers killed in that operation. Nineteen (19) soldiers of Nepalese origin were killed in the that operation. The Next of Kins of the deceased soldiers are given Liberalised Special Family Pension on the basis of the last pay drawn; ex-gratia lump sum compensation of Rs. 10 lakhs; and death gratuity and family gratuity as per the rules. In addition, from the National Defence Fund, housing grant of Rs. 5 lakhs; education grant @ Rs. 1 lakh per child subject to the maximum of Rs. 2 lakhs per family and dependent parent grant of Rs. 1.2 lakhs has been given to the family of every soldier killed in Kargil operation. The families of the soldiers of Nepalese origin have been given an additional grant of Rs. 5 lakhs from the National Defence Fund in lieu of the ex-gratia grants given by the various State Governments to the families of the soldiers of Indian origin.

Untested Russian Choppers to India

2709. SHRI Y.S. VIVEKANANDA REDDY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Navy has signed a contract to purchase four airborne early warning Kamov-31 helicopters from Russia even though the craft is reported to have not been tested in equatorial water conditions;

(b) if so, the facts thereof; and

(c) the terms and conditions laid for the contract along with the cost of the Aircraft?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) and (b) A contract for supply of four KA-31 helicopters by Russia was concluded on 16th August, 1999. KA-31 helicopter is based on KA-28 airframe with an early warning radar. As the Navy has been operating Kamov class (KA-25 and KA-28) helicopters since 1981-82; it was not considered necessary to test this helicopter in equatorial water, in advance.

(c) Four KA-31 Airborne Early Warning helicopters along with sets of tools, spares and ground support equipment are to be delivered to Indian Navy in two batches as per the terms and conditions of the contract. The cost of each helicopter is 13.95 million USD. Payments to the supplier are to be made at the various stages of production of these helicopters.

Formation on Railway Intelligence Cell

2710. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to form a Railway Intelligence Cell for strengthening the security in order to prevent sabotage in trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the special distinction to be maintained by such Intelligence Cell; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH) : (a) No, Sir. An Intelligence Branch already functions in the Indian Railways.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Closure of Sugar Mills

2711. SHRI RAJO SINGH : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of sugar mills closed down during the years 1997-98, 1998-99, 1999-2000 till date;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) the reasons for their closure; and

(d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government for rehabilitation of workers and revival of these mills?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : (a) and (b) Statewise number of sugar mills which remained closed during the sugar seasons 1997-98 & 1998-99 as per available information is given in the enclosed Statement.

During the current sugar season 1999-2000, a total of 325 sugar mills have already started crushing operation, 4 sugar mills have informed that they will not work and the information in respect of remaining 154 sugar mills has not been received so far.

(c) Closure of mills could be due to variety of factors such as inadequate cane availability uneconomical size, old age and bad condition of plant and machinery, technical and managerial incompetence, excessively high cane price not commensurate with sales realisation and other factors.

(d) The Sugar mills in the country are grouped in three sectors namely, public, private and cooperative. The sick sugar mills under the Cooperative Sector are not required to be registered with Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) and are dealt with by the State Cooperative Societies Acts. The sick sugar units belonging to Private and Public Sectors are covered under the provisions of the Sick Industrial companies (Special Provision) Act, 1985. As per the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provision) Act, 1985 (SICA.), where an industrial company has become sick, the Board of Directors of the company shall within 60 days from the date of finalisation of audited accounts of the company for the financial year as at the end of which the company has become sick make a reference to BIFR for determination of measures which shall be adopted with respect to the company.

Statement

State-wise number of Sugar Mills which remained closed during the Sugar seasons 1997-98 & 1998-99

Sl. No.	State	Number of Closed Sugar Mills	
		Sugar Season 1997-98	Sugar Season 1998-99
1.	Punjab	1	1
2.	Uttar Pradesh	2	10
3.	Madhya Pradesh	2	2
4.	Gujarat	2	3
5.	Maharashtra	25	10
6.	Bihar	17	17
7.	Assam	1	1
8.	Orissa	1	1
9.	West Bengal	1	—
10.	Nagaland	1	1
11.	Andhra Pradesh	5	5
12.	Karnataka	4	2
13.	Kerala	1	1
Total		63	54

[English]

Replacement of 'Vikrant' and 'Virat'

2712. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have finally decided to dispose of Vikrant as scrap;

(b) if so, whether no proper use of the aircraft carrier 'Vikrant' like training instruction, exhibition or announcement was considered feasible;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken or proposed to be taken to replace 'Vikrant' and 'Virat' early?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) The Government of Maharashtra have evinced interest in converting INS 'Vikrant', which was decommissioned in January 1997, into a maritime museum.

(d) Necessary steps to find replacements have been taken. The construction of an Air Defence Ship has already been sanctioned.

Performance of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana

2713. SHRI DINSHA PATEL :
SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE :
SHRI RAMANAND SINGH :

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of physical and financial performance of all States/UTs under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana during 1998-99 and the current financial year;

(b) whether the State governments have failed to achieve the target during the above period;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the remedial action taken for proper implementation of the Scheme;

(d) whether any monitoring system has been introduced or proposed to be introduced to check the misappropriation of funds;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) If not, the ways in which it is proposed to check the corruption in the Gram Panchayats?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA) : (a) Statements I and II showing physical and financial performance of all States/UTs under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY)/Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY) during 1998-99 and 1999-2000 are enclosed.

(b) and (c) During 1998-99, against the target of 3966.57 lakh mandays generation of employment under JRY in the country as a whole, the achievement is 3766.22 lakhs mandays which is 94.95% and is considered quite satisfactory. Since the main objective of JGSY is creation of demand driven durable rural infrastructure as per the felt need of the village panchayats, no physical targets has been set under the programme for 1999-2000.

(d) Yes Sir.

(e) The Ministry has introduced an Area Officers Scheme under which Senior Officers of this Ministry are nominated as Area Officers for particular State(s). They are required to visit their allocated States at least once in a quarter and submit their Reports regarding the implementation of the various schemes including JRY. Review meetings are also held with the State Secretaries in charge of Rural Development Departments to review the performance under various schemes. From July 1999 a Performance Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development has been set

up to review performance of the various Central sectors/ Centrally sponsored schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development on a quarterly basis for monitoring the effective execution of the schemes/programmes. Also works under JGSY at the block, district and State levels are monitored by the Monitoring and Vigilance Committees constituted for overseeing the various programmes of this Ministry. For effective implementation of the programme, physical monitoring through regular field inspections by officers

dealing with JGSY at the State headquarters has been made mandatory. Provision has also been made in the programme guidelines for the Gram Sabha to appoint a Vigilance Committee for each village to oversee, supervise and monitor the implementation of each work under the programme. There is also provision for social audit of works under the Yojana by the Gram Sabha.

(f) Does not arise.

Statement I

Statement showing financial progress under Jawahar Rozgar Yojana during 1998-99 (Provisional)

(Rs. in lakhs)

Sl. No.	State/U.Ts	Month Code	Balance as on 1.4.98.	Allocation			Releases			Total Funds Available	Funds Utilised	% age Utilisation
				Centre	State	Total	Centre (March)	State	Total			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Andhra Pradesh	3	2746.56	11703.94	2925.99	14629.93	11702.49	2925.62	14628.11	17374.67	14710.4	84.67
2	Arunachal Pradesh	3	86.68	257.32	64.33	321.65	475.26	118.82	594.08	680.76	326.12	47.91
3	Assam	3	1070.03	6686.18	1671.55	8357.73	15112.28	3778.07	18890.35	19960.38	10967.57	54.95
4	Bihar	3	14422.08	38340.77	9585.19	47925.96	29733.82	7433.46	37167.28	51589.36	41851.12	81.12
5	Goa	3	25.68	172.2	43.05	215.25	103.32	25.83	129.15	154.83	166.8	107.73
6	Gujarat	3	1061.63	4405.58	1101.4	5506.98	4449.43	1112.36	5561.79	6623.42	5958.62	89.96
7	Haryana	3	227.54	2591.88	647.97	3239.85	2591.88	647.97	3239.85	3467.39	2908.76	83.89
8	Himachal Pradesh	3	189.25	1091.54	272.89	1364.43	1022.15	255.54	1277.69	1466.94	1083.72	73.88
9	Jammu & Kashmir	3	370.63	1350.93	337.73	1688.66	1094.62	273.66	1368.28	1738.91	1489.06	85.63
10	Karnataka	3	2892.74	8838.13	2209.53	11047.66	10838.13	2709.53	13547.66	16440.4	11288.71	68.66
11	Kerala	3	935.6	3965.64	991.41	4957.05	3965.65	991.41	4957.06	5892.66	4089.65	69.4
12	Madhya Pradesh	3	3802.47	19433.93	4858.48	24292.41	18314.14	2915.09	21229.23	25031.7	22780.65	90.93
13	Maharashtra	3	2156.99	17470.82	4367.71	21838.53	17180.81	4295.2	21476.01	23633	20780.48	87.93
14	Manipur	3	39.92	448.24	112.06	560.3	501.64	125.41	627.05	666.97	430.78	64.59
15	Meghalaya	3	134.52	502.19	125.55	627.74	951.75	237.94	1189.69	1324.21	348.96	26.35
16	Mizoram	3	4.82	116.21	29.05	145.26	296.89	74.22	371.11	375.93	318.37	84.69
17	Nagaland	3	7.09	344.48	86.12	430.6	775.99	194	969.99	977.08	956.77	97.92
18	Orissa	3	2870.78	13386.9	3346.73	16733.63	13443.31	3360.83	16804.14	19674.92	15218.63	77.35

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
19	Punjab	3	200.06	1259.63	314.91	1574.54	1559.63	389.91	1949.54	2149.6	1381.15	64.25
20	Rajasthan	3	427.52	6711.09	1677.77	8388.86	6008.5	1502.13	7510.63	7938.15	9780.6	123.21
21	Sikkim	3	21.76	128.66	32.17	160.83	288	72	360	381.76	411.41	107.77
22	Tamil Nadu	3	1045.98	10348.85	2587.21	12936.06	10348.85	2587.21	12936.06	13982.04	14974.42	107.1
23	Tripura	3	9.95	809.31	202.33	1011.64	1824.38	456.1	2280.48	2290.43	2296.83	100.28
24	Uttar Pradesh	3	8494.04	42194.35	10548.59	52742.94	42235.9	10558.98	52794.88	61288.92	55507.2	90.57
25	West Bengal	3	5734.87	14876.87	3719.22	18596.09	10061.21	2515.3	12576.51	18311.38	12372.19	67.57
26	A & N Islands	3	61.26	117.89	0	117.89	39.7	0	39.7	100.96	24.41	24.18
27	D & N Haveli	1	5.39	77.81	0	77.81	48.94	0	48.94	54.33	36.75	67.84
28	Daman & Diu	3	5.11	37.7	0	37.7	10.06	0	10.06	15.17	6.04	39.82
29	Lakshadweep	1	14.1	59.1	0	59.1	35.46	0	35.46	49.56	29.29	59.1
30	Pondicherry	3	7.72	115.42	0	115.42	82.14	0	82.14	89.86	72.83	81.05
Total			49072.77	207843.6	51858.91	259702.5	205096.3	49556.56	254652.9	303725.7	252548.3	83.15

Physical performance under JRY during 1998-99 (Provisional)

(Lakh Mandays)

Sl. No.	State/U.Ts	Month Code	Annual Target (tentative)	Achievement	%age Ach.	SECTORAL ACHIEVEMENT					
						SC	ST	SC/ST	Others	Women	Landless
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Andhra Pradesh	3	254.01	224.68	88.45	66.47	27.15	93.62	131.05	76.08	147.71
2	Arunachal Pradesh	3	7.97	3.96	49.69	0	3.96	3.96	0	0	0
3	Assam	3	144.36	199.57	138.24	35.91	66.83	102.74	96.83	23.96	77.51
4	Bihar	3	688.11	584.91	85	233.49	112.85	346.34	238.57	159.55	348.67
5	Goa	3	3.32	1.7	51.2	0	0	0	1.7	0.73	0
6	Gujarat	3	53.34	59.18	110.95	10.41	28.18	38.59	20.59	15.62	23.03
7	Haryana	3	30.49	23.84	78.19	14.18	0	14.18	9.66	4.92	22.97
8	Himachal Pradesh	3	17	15.39	90.53	6.92	2.03	8.95	6.44	0.74	0.25
9	Jammu & Kashmir	3	27.5	20.59	74.87	0	0	0	0	0	0

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
10	Karnataka	3	188.82	222.16	117.66	61.89	27.07	88.96	110.4	67.78	82.51
11	Kerala	3	69.77	39.39	56.46	11	1.3	12.3	27.09	13.65	4.94
12	Madhya Pradesh	3	325.8	319.34	98.02	76.97	127.92	204.89	114.45	109.8	113.34
13	Maharashtra	3	541.22	403.81	74.61	109.47	96.65	206.12	197.69	141.19	152.29
14	Manipur	3	6.92	5.59	80.78	0.19	3.67	3.86	1.73	0.5	0
15	Meghalaya	3	10.22	5.91	57.83	0.25	5.66	5.91	0	1.89	1.2
16	Mizoram	3	1.84	4.36	236.96	0	4.36	4.36	0	1.54	0
17	Nagaland	3	9.82	23.73	241.65	0	23.73	23.73	0	5.46	0
18	Orissa	3	317.94	296.84	93.36	89.54	107	196.54	100	91.55	64.83
19	Punjab	3	15.46	13.89	89.84	10.27	0	10.27	3.62	0.39	11.75
20	Rajasthan	3	149.43	148.3	99.24	52.69	39.42	92.11	56.19	49.17	16.89
21	Sikkim	3	2.29	6.13	267.69	1.38	2.4	3.78	2.35	1.94	0.19
22	Tamil Nadu	3	230.42	280.97	121.94	137.18	6.4	143.58	137.4	105.36	219.09
23	Tripura	3	18.02	34.72	192.67	8.76	17	25.76	8.96	9.89	12.63
24	Uttar Pradesh	3	626.32	691.39	110.39	365.08	6.82	371.9	319.49	157.25	176.6
25	West Bengal	3	220.83	134.45	60.88	52.71	16.33	69.04	65.41	32.02	80.96
26	A & N Islands	3	1.3	0.19	14.62	0	0.1	0.1	0.09	0.04	0.06
27	D & N Haveli	1	1.11	0.67	60.36	0	0.67	0.67	0	0.51	0
28	Daman & Diu	3	0.57	0.11	19.3	0.3	0.4	0.7	0.5	0.07	0.05
29	Lakshadweep	1	1.12	0.42	37.5	0.42	0	0.42	0	0.18	0
30	Pondicherry	3	1.25	0.03	2.11	0.01	0	0.01	0.01	0	0
Total			3966.57	3766.22	94.95	1345.49	727.9	2073.39	1650.22	1071.78	1557.47

Statement II*Financial progress under JGSY during 1999-2000 for the Month of October***A. Releases***(As on 3.12.99)*

Sl. No.	State/U.Ts	Month Code	Balance as on 1.4.98.	Allocation			Releases		
				Centre	State	Total	Centre (Sept.)	State	Total
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1.	Andhra Pradesh	8	2417.03	9319.52	3106.51	12426.03	4659.76	1553.1	6212.86
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	8	381.09	204.9	68.3	273.2	77.82	25.94	103.76
3.	Assam	8	4062.65	5324.02	1774.67	7398.69	2662.01	887.25	3549.26
4.	Bihar	8	11666.61	30529.68	10176.56	40706.24	15264.86	5087.78	20352.64
5.	Goa	10	3.16	137.12	45.71	182.82	68.56	22.85	91.41
6.	Gujarat	10	607.11	3508.04	1169.35	4677.39	1726.02	575.28	2301.3
7.	Haryana	7	667.27	2063.84	687.95	2751.79	1031.92	343.94	1375.86
8.	Himachal Pradesh	10	237.44	869.16	289.72	1158.86	379.75	126.57	506.32
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	9	213.28	1075.71	358.57	1434.28	492.5	164.15	656.65
10.	Karnataka	10	2482.19	7037.56	2345.85	9383.41	3518.78	1172.81	4691.59
11.	Kerala	10	1636.29	3157.73	1052.58	4210.3	1578.87	526.24	2105.11
12.	Madhya Pradesh	8	3843.07	15474.69	5158.23	20632.92	7573.02	2524.09	10097.11
13.	Maharashtra	9	2964.41	13911.52	4637.17	18548.7	6955.76	2318.35	9274.11
14.	Manipur			356.92	118.97	475.89	94.84	31.61	126.45
15.	Meghalaya	8	280.64	399.88	133.29	533.17	132.18	44.06	176.24
16.	Mizoram	10	14.38	92.53	30.84	123.38	46.27	15.42	61.69
17.	Nagaland	6	0	274.3	91.43	365.73	137.15	45.71	182.86
18.	Orissa	9	2286.64	10659.61	3553.2	14212.82	5329.81	1776.43	7106.24
19.	Punjab	10	214.15	1003.01	334.34	1337.34	501.51	167.15	688.66
20.	Rajasthan	8	0	5343.85	1781.28	7125.14	2602.09	867.28	3469.37
21.	Sikkim	9	20.24	102.45	34.15	136.6	51.23	17.07	68.3
22.	Tamil Nadu	10	265.29	8240.5	2746.83	10987.33	4120.25	1373.28	5493.53
23.	Tripura	9	0	644.43	214.81	2286.64	322.22	107.4	429.62
24.	Uttar Pradesh	10	5471.85	33598.18	11199.39	44797.57	14408.21	4802.26	19210.47
25.	West Bengal	8	6337.5	11846.03	3948.68	15794.71	3880.59	1293.4	5173.99
26.	A & N Islands	7	48.49	93.87	0	93.87	13	0	13
27.	D & N Haveli	7	0	61.96	0	61.96	30.98	0	30.98
28.	Daman & Diu	7	2.05	30.02	0	30.02	0	0	0
29.	Lakshadweep	5	8.26	47.06	0	47.06	0	0	0
30.	Pondicherry	8	0	91.91	0	91.91	45.96	0	45.96
Total			46131.09	165500	55058.39	221985.8	77705.92	25869.41	103575.3

Note: The blank column denote non-reporting of figures by the State/UTs.

B-Utilisation

Sl. No.	State/UTs	Month Code	Total Funds Available (Col. 4 + 10)	Funds Utilised			Percentage Utilisation		
				Total	Individual SC/STs	Disabled	Total	Individual SC/STs	Disabled
			11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1	Andhra Pradesh	8	8629.89	19428.83					
2	Arunachal Praesh	8	484.85	56.66			11.69	0	0
3	Assam	8	7611.91	3006.9			39.5	0	0
4	Bihar	8	32019.25	11393.09			35.58	0	0
5	Goa	10	94.57	86.41			91.37	0	0
6	Gujarat	10	2908.41	1586.43		2	54.55	0	2
7	Haryana	7	2043.13	488.29			23.9	0	0
8	Himachal Pradesh	10	743.76	452.46	0	0	60.83	0	0
9	Jammu & Kashmir	9	869.93	189.39			21.77	0	0
10	Karnataka	10	7173.78	3757.96	3031		52.38	80.66	0
11	Kerala	10	3741.4	1262.61	325	0	33.75	25.74	0
12	Madhya Pradesh	8	13940.18	5465.08			39.2	0	0
13	Maharashtra	9	2238.52	4999.67	656.7		40.85	13.13	0
14	Manipur		126.45				0	0	0
15	Meghalaya	8	456.88	180.98			39.61	0	0
16	Mizoram	10	76.07	68.98	68.98	0	90.68	100	0
17	Nagaland	6	182.86	85.85			46.95	0	0
18	Orissa	9	9392.88	2853.02	327.56		30.37	11.48	0
19	Punjab	10	882.81	563.19	221.33	0.16	63.79	39.3	0.03
20	Rajasthan	8	3469.37	1780.31			51.32	0	0
21	Sikkim	9	88.54	48.48	29.94		54.75	61.76	0
22	Tamil Nadu	10	5758.82	5240.01	1686.73	6.796	90.99	32.19	0.12
23	Tripura	9	429.62	529	396		123.13	74.86	0
24	Uttar Pradesh	10	24682.32	9287.68	1982.34	7.09	37.63	21.34	0.08
25	West Bengal	8	11511.49	3493.57			30.35	0	0
26	A & N Islands	7	61.49	8.57			13.94	0	0
27	D & N Haveli	7	30.98	0.85			2.74	0	0
28	Daman & Diu	7	2.05	0			0	0	0
29	Lakshadweep	5	8.26	4.03			48.79	0	0
30	Pondicherry	8	45.96				0	0	0
Total			149706.4	76318.3	8725.58		50.98	11.43	0

Note: The blank column denote non-reporting of figures by the State/UTs.

Physical Performance under JGSY 1999-2000 upto September

Sl. No.	State/UTs	Month Code	Status of Works (in numbers)					Total Mandays Generated (in lakh)
			Works completed	Works under progress	Total Works	Works exclusively SC/STs	Works Disabled	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Andhra Pradesh	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
2	Arunachal Pradesh	8	55	432	487	0	0	0.83
3	Assam	8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	54.49
4	Bihar	8	15053	43523	58576	6778	0	130.93
5	Goa	9	15	205	220	NR	NR	0.78
6	Gujarat	9	1936	4770	6706	NR	NR	8.58
7	Haryana	7	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	3.07
8	Himachal Pradesh	9	599	1627	2226	NR	NR	4.97
9	Jammu & Kashmir	9	1306	4249	5555	NR	NR	2.63
10	Karnataka	9	6379	12439	18818	2668	NR	39.68
11	Kerala	9	5067	17258	22325	5232	NR	12.73
12	Madhya Pradesh	8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	71.72
13	Maharashtra	9	11697	20764	32461	5415	NR	82.13
14	Manipur	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR
15	Meghalaya	8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	2.76
16	Mizoram	6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0.18
17	Nagaland	6	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	2.03
18	Orissa	9	10880	8471	19351	2861	NR	55.93
19	Punjab	9	4433	6376	10809	4824	NR	3.36
20	Rajasthan	8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	26.92
21	Sikkim	9	619	188	807	12	NR	0.65
22	Tamil Nadu	9	2967	25765	28732	13471	NR	37.48
23	Tripura	9	600	NR	600	1875	NR	8.75
24	Uttar Pradesh	9	2238	4786	7024	NR	NR	60.69
25	West Bengal	8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	31.46
26	A & N Islands	7	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0.11
27	D & N Haveli	7	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0.01
28	Daman & Diu	7	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0
29	Lakshadweep	5	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0.02
30	Pondicherry	8	NR	NR	NR	NR	NR	0
Total			63844	150853	214697	43136	NR	642.89

Note: Physical Progress is now monitored in terms of number of works completed and taken up in place of Mandays generation as JGSY has now become an infrastructure development programme. However, total mandays generated upto the reporting month has also been indicated in column 9.

NR: Not Reported.

12.00 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) to section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Indian Railway Finance Corporation, Limited, New Delhi for the year 1998-99.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Indian Railway Finance Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1998-99, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 834/99]

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling, for the year 1998-99, together with Audit Report thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 835/99]

(2) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the Jawahar Institute of Mountaineering and Winter Sports, Batote, for the year 1998-99, together with Audited Report thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 836/99]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, for the year 1998-99, alongwith Audited Accounts.
- (ii) Statement regarding Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, New Delhi, for the year 1988-99.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 837/99]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute of

Rural Development, Hyderabad, for the year 1997-98.

- (ii) A copy of the Annual Accounts (Hindi and English versions) of the National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad, for the year 1997-98, together with Audited Report thereon.
- (iii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Institute of Rural Development, Hyderabad for the year 1997-98.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 838/99]

THE MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHANTA KUMAR): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy of the Statement (Hindi and English versions) explaining reasons for not laying the annual Report and Audited Accounts of the Food Corporation of India for the years 1996-97, 1997-98 and 1998-99 within the stipulated period of nine months after the close of the Accounting years.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 839/99]

(2) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Vegetable Oils Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1997-98.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Vegetable Oils Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1997-98 along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 840/99]

(4) A copy of the memorandum of understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the Hindustan Vegetable Oils Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Food and Consumer Affairs, for the year 1999-2000.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 841/99]

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619 A of the Companies Act, 1956:

- (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Vayudoot Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1993-94.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Vayudoot Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1993-94, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 842/99]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (KUMARI UMA BHARTI) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:

- (a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Utkal Ashok Hotel Corporation Limited, Puri, for the year 1997-98.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Utkal Ashok Hotel Corporation Limited, Puri, for the year 1997-98, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 843/99]

- (b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Assam Ashok Hotel Corporation Limited, Guwahati, for the year 1997-98.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Assam Ashok Hotel Corporation Limited, Guwahati, for the year 1997-98, alongwith Audited Accounts, and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 844/99]

- (c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Donyi Polo Ashok Hotel Corporation Limited, Itanagar, for the year 1997-98.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Donyi Polo Ashok Hotel Corporation Limited, Itanagar, for the year

1997-98, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 845/99]

- (d) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Pondicherry Ashok Hotel Corporation Limited, Pondicherry, for the year 1998-99.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Pondicherry Ashok Hotel Corporation Limited, Pondicherry, for the year 1998-99, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 846/99]

- (e) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the India Tourism Development Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1998-99.
- (ii) Annual Report of the India Tourism Development Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 1998-99, alongwith Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(2) Three statements (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (a) to (c) of item (1) above.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 847/99]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy of the Central Warehousing Corporation (Amendment) Rules, 1999 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R. 644 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 20th September, 1999 under sub-section (3) of section 41 of the Warehousing Corporation Act, 1962.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 848/99]

- (2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Warehousing Corporation, for the year 1998-99, alongwith Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Central Warehousing Corporation for the year 1998-99.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 849/99]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under section 39 of the Bureau of Indian Standards Act 1986:

- (i) The Bureau of Indian Standards (Certification) (Amendment) Regulations, 1999, published in Notification No. G.S.R. 199 (E) in Gazette of India dated the 11th March, 1999; together with a corrigendum thereto published in Notification No. G.S.R. 605(E) dated the 25th August, 1999.
- (ii) The Bureau of Indian Standards (Appointment, Terms and Conditions of Service of Director General) Amendment Rules, 1999 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 342(E) in Gazette of India dated the 12th May, 1999.
- (iii) The Bureau of Indian Standards (Powers and Duties of Director General) (Amendment) Regulations, 1999 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 389(E) in Gazette of India dated the 26th May, 1999.
- (iv) The Bureau of Indian Standards (Recruitment to Administration, Finance and Other Posts) Amendment Regulations, 1999 published in Notification No. G.S.R. 558(E) in Gazette of India dated the 29th July, 1999.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 850/99]

12.03 hrs.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER

Panel of Chairmen

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : There is an announcement from the Chair. Hon. Members, I have to inform the House that under Rule 9 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I have nominated the following Members as members of Panel of Chairmen:

1. Shri Basu Deb Acharya
2. Shrimati Margaret Alva
3. Dr. Laxminarayan Pandeyya
4. Shri P.H. Pandiyan
5. Shri Shrinivas Patil
6. Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh

7. Shri Beni Prasad Verma
8. Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav
9. Shri K. Yerrannaidu

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Now, we will take up Calling Attention. Shri S. Bangarappa.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA (Shimoga) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I call the attention of the hon. Minister of Power ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will take up 'Zero Hour' after Calling Attention.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Sir, I have given a notice on a very important subject. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will take up 'Zero Hour' after Calling Attention.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your kind permission. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will call you after Calling Attention. You have given notice. Shri S. Bangarappa.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Mr. Speaker Sir, I call the attention of the ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Chouhan, I have told you that I will call you after Calling Attention.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please ask your Members to take their seats.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will take up 'Zero Hour' after the Calling Attention. Please understand. What is this?

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You come to me. You have given notice. I will call you after Calling Attention. Please take your seat. I will allow you. Please understand.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN (Vidisha) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, a cabinet Minister has been murdered in

Madhya Pradesh. (*Interruptions*) This is an important matter. It should be taken up first . . . (*Interruptions*)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Chouhan, I told you that I will allow you after this Calling Attention.

Shri Bangarappa.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Mr. Speaker Sir, with your kind permission, I call the attention. . . . (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : Please take your seat. I will allow you after the Calling Attention and not now.

1205 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO A MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Reported loss to State of Karnataka due to withdrawal by Cogentrix Promoters from the proposed power plant in Mangalore

[English]

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA (Shimoga) : Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Power to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The situation arising out of reported loss to State of Karnataka due to withdrawal by Cogentrix promoters from the proposed power plant in Mangalore and steps taken by the Government in regard thereto."

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : Sir, it has been reported in the press that the promoters of the 1013.2 MW Mangalore Thermal Power Project have decided to withdraw from the development of this project on the ground that it is no longer feasible to develop it, owing to inordinate delays in obtaining various clearances and Public Interest Litigation in Courts. However, no official communication has so far been received by the Government from the promoting companies in this regard.

The Mangalore project is being developed by Mangalore Power Company promoted by Messrs Cogentrix USA and Messers China Light and Power. This is one of the original eight counter guarantee projects being developed on the MOU route. The project was given Techno-economic Clearance by CEA at a provisional cost of US \$ 751.574 million plus Rs. 15,808.9 million and FGD cost of US \$ 57.93 million plus Rs. 910.9 million. Most clearances including environmental clearances and foreign investment approval have been obtained.

Under the revised procedure, for the issue of counter guarantee, the scope of the counter guarantee has been limited to cover only the outstanding foreign debt in the event of termination of PPA. Under this procedure, there would be no further examination of the PPA by Government of India and it will be the responsibility of the State Government to satisfy themselves about the reasonableness of the tariff before financial closure. However, this State Government would be required to send copies of the final, revised PPA to the Ministries of Finance and Power for information and record before financial closure, alongwith a statement from the SEB/State Government about having considered the comments of the CEA and consultants of Ministry of Finance along with the certification that the PPA is in line with Government of India notification/law. In order to bring down the tariffs, the State Governments have been asked to adopt certain measures like not allowing income tax on incentives to be pass through in tariff and not allowing additional profits to be derived by the developer on account of the actual operational performance being better than the normative levels fixed for the purpose of tariff fixation.

While three fast track projects have already been given counter guarantee under the revised procedure, the Government decided to consider the issue of counter guarantee for this project after the verdict of the Supreme Court on a SLP filed by Government of Karnataka became available.

Earlier, in 1997, Shri Arun Kumar Agarwal had filed a Writ Petition No. 10696/97 in the High Court of Karnataka in which issues such as award of the project to Cogentrix, signing of MOU, financial position of Cogentrix, shifting of the project site from Bangalore to Mangalore, etc., were raised. The High Court, in its judgment passed in February, 1998, ordered that an FIR would be registered with the CBI by the Government of Karnataka under the provisions of Delhi Special Police Establishment Act for various cognisable offences without naming any person or group of persons as accused, and the Director General of the CBI would get it investigated under the supervision and control of an officer not below the rank of Deputy Inspector General of Police. Government of Karnataka filed a SLP in the Supreme Court against the High Court judgment. The Supreme Court after hearing, reserved the final judgment on 15.1.1999.

It is now learnt that the Apex Court has delivered the judgment on 13.12.1999 in which the High Court judgment is reported to have been set aside. However, copy of the Supreme Court order has not so far been received by us. After the judgment of the Supreme Court was pronounced, the officials of the Company met me on 13.12.1999. I have requested them to reconsider their decision to pull out from the project and the officials have assured that they would revert to us after consulting the Board of Directors of the

two promoting Companies. The issue of counter guarantee can be considered by the Government after receipt of the Supreme Court order.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bangarappa, the statement made by the hon. Minister is very clear. You can only ask clarifications on this.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow you. But let me complete this subject first. Please understand the procedure.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You must know the procedure. Please understand that the hon. Minister has made a statement in regard to the Calling Attention Notice and some hon. Members would have to ask some clarifications on that. Please understand this.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: First of all, you must know the procedure. I know the importance of the subject that you would like to raise. I will call your name and allow you to speak also.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Chouhan, you are a senior Member. You know the procedure. In the Calling Attention Motion, clarifications would have to be asked and those would have to be answered by the hon. Minister.

... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bangarappa, the statement is very clear. Now you can ask some clarifications on that. Please ask pointed clarifications.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI S. BNGARAPPA: Sir, this project relates to the production of power of about 1000 MW. The State of Karnataka is reeling under severe drought and power conditions. The State requires about 2000 to 3000 MW of power. That is the demand of the State.

Sir, when I was the Chief Minister of Karnataka, we signed an MoU in the year 1992 with this Cogentrix company to produce 1000 MW of power in Karnataka. After I relinquished the office of the Chief Minister, the successive State Governments also continued the process of obtaining all the clearances — that were initiated by us — that were pending before the Government of India. Later on, a site for the project was also located at Mangalore district, in a place called Nandipur. Thereafter, the Karnataka Electricity Board entered into an understanding with M/s Cogentrix which is

one of the promoters of the Mangalore Power Company. The Mangalore Power Company consists of two subsidiary companies, namely, M/s China Light and Power Company which is based in Hong Kong and the other one is M/s Cogentrix.

Now, after the process was initiated by the State Government through the State Electricity Board the matter was put up to the Government of India. This process was initiated in 1992 under the regime of the liberalised economic policy announced by the then Congress Government in 1991-92. But since then this project has not found favour with the Government of India.

Sir, this entire project was divided into four phases and it was slated to produce 250 MW of power at the initial stage and continue to add 250 MW each in the other three phases of production. The Central Electricity Authority, the Ministry of Power, the Ministry of Environment and the Law Ministry were involved in this project. The Central Government unnecessarily and continuously has been creating so many problems at so many levels.

Sir, all these things happened before Shri Kumaramangalam took over this Ministry. But my worry is that even after his taking over this Ministry things have been allowed to continue like this. Why should things continue like this? What I feel is that the cases that are pending before the Karnataka High Court ... (Interruptions) It is a serious matter ... (Interruptions)

SHRI K. H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar) : Why are you interrupting the Calling Attention motion? ... (Interruptions)

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA: Sir, now there were two sets of PILs filed... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bangarappa, you can seek the clarification now.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Sir, I know the scope of discussion. But I would take a little time.

Sir, one PIL was filed in the Karnataka High Court relating to environment matters but that was dismissed by the Karnataka High Court. The other PIL was filed regarding receiving of some kickbacks and something like that. There was a direction to the CBI and the matter went up to the Supreme Court (Interruptions)

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF (Bangalore North) : Sir, what is this? ... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL (Varanasi) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, for how long will he speak? We too have given notices for Zero Hour ... (Interruptions)

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj U.P.) : They are giving suggestion to the Chair. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You may sit down. I will hear you also.

... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Bangarappaji, please ask your question.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Sir, things have gone on like this and now the Supreme Court has delivered its judgement on the 13th of December, as the hon. Minister has just now stated. The entire thing is clear now. Earlier, when these matters were pending in the High Court and Supreme Court, there was no stay order asking the Central Government and the State Government not to pursue the matter. Yet, unnecessarily the Government of India had allowed things to lie like this for years together. It had taken about five to seven years for the Government of India, to take clearance on just one point.

MR. SPEAKER: Anyhow, now the Supreme Court has disposed of the matter.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : This is a separate issue. Legally there was no stay order.

MR. SPEAKER: You ask your question please.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN (Vidisha) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, we are agitated, there is no law and order there... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seats.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN : I want to raise the issue of law and order. I humbly request you to grant me the permission for raising this matter. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Shri Bangarappa.

... *(Interruptions)**

MR. SPEAKER: I appeal to you to resume your seats. This is a Calling Attention. Please understand.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I will allow you. You should not disturb the proceedings like this. Please take your seats.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN : I humbly request to grant me permission to speak. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, I told you that I will allow you. Please take your seat.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, this is a very serious matter. ... *(Interruptions)* If they go on like this, we will not let the House run. ... *(Interruptions)* Let them decide if they want to run the House or not. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Bangarappaji, you come to your question straight. You can only seek a clarification.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : I know the limitation, Sir.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : Sir, I seek your protection. Our Member has the right to seek clarification and yet the Members from the other side are constantly disturbing the proceedings. ... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR (Faizabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the labourers are dying due to starvation, there is nobody to listen to them. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This is too much. Shri Vinay Katiyar, please take your seat.

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR: For how long will this go on. We never get an opportunity to speak. Only these people get chance to speak. Should we walk out... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: There is a rule. Please understand that. You take your seat.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR: Should we not come to the House. Will the House be run by these four people only? ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Katiyar, please take your seat.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : I request the leaders to please intervene.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, is it not the responsibility of the Government to run the House? ... *(Interruptions)* It seems the Government has abdicated its responsibility. ... *(Interruptions)* Where is the Leader of the House and where is the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs? ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. What is this? You must understand the procedure first. Please take your seat.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Vinay Katiyar, you cannot say

[Translation]

For 'how long will it go on'.

... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. This is not your business to say.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, they want to express their views in the House by creating uproar, as they do outside the House. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI R. L. JALAPPA (Chikballapur) : Sir, they do not want to answer properly. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Shri S. Bangarappa, please be brief. You can seek some clarification. It is already 12.20 now.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Sir, I would have finished my point by now. But they have been disturbing. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, give me half a second. It is for you to regulate the House. But if any and every Member from the Treasury Benches tries to regulate the House, how can you regulate the House? ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, please ask your Members to take their seats. This is not good.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Sir, this is for you to pull him up. Why is the Minister keeping quiet? Every time, Members from the Treasury Benches are disturbing. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: What is this? This is not proper.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, please ask your Members to take their seats.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : Sir, the hon. Member, Shri Bangarappa may yield for a second.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, first of all, you ask your Members to take their seats.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : Sir, I am sorry for the disturbance, but I think, it is relevant to point out. The emotions are running high. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : It is not his business... *(Interruptions)* ... The Minister is responding to the Calling Attention.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : I have apologized at the outset... *(Interruptions)* How can he do like this? ... *(Interruptions)* I have already apologized.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri S. Bangarappa, the time at our disposal is very short. Please ask the clarification straight.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : Sir, I was apologetic on behalf of my party MPs. ... *(Interruptions)*. He does not want even to listen to me. ... *(Interruptions)*. This is too much.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri S. Bangarappa, there are other hon. Members also to speak.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Yes, Sir, I know the value of the time.

Sir our Power Purchase Agreement was entered into, and it was sent by the State Government through its Electricity Board, Cogentrix company and the Mangalore Corporation, twice or thrice as per the direction given by the Government of India. Then the matter was sent to the Government of India for counter-guarantee.

Sir, then the entire things started. At this point, on the advice given by the Central Electricity Board, the Ministry of Power, the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Law, the counter-guarantee had gone through several changes.

So, on the part of the Government of India, the whole process consumed about five to five and a half years only to get the counter guarantee.

Sir, this is a fast track project approved by the Government of India. This is one of the seven or eight power projects announced by the Government of India.

MR. SPEAKER: Shri S. Bangarappa, please hear me. As per the Rule 197 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, after the Minister has given a statement, there should not be any debate.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Sir, I am not making any debate.

MR. SPEAKER: You can ask one question. Please understand that other Members have also to seek clarification.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : There are two doubts that have entered into my mind after going through his statement. Now, an astounding approach has been adopted by the Government of India wherein several changes have gone there on the suggestion given by the Ministries on several stages. You please go through all this. Sir, I have got a long list of evidence ever since starting from 3.7.92. Actually, an appalling situation has arisen now.

MR. SPEAKER: What is your question please?

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Sir, the counter-guarantee matter was cleared in 1997. Again, the Minister of Power, that is, the Government of India made suggestions. In his statement, he has suggested that we are sending this approval to the Government of India and you also keep us informed. And, as per the instructions we have to clear the PPA, the Power Purchase Agreement.

Sir, again, they are putting all these questions.

MR. SPEAKER: You please ask your question.

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is going to clear project once for all.

Is he going to create all these hurdles at all the stages as he has done in the past? That is all I want to know from you.

I request you kindly to approve this one and say 'yes' for all these things.

SHRI R. L. JALAPPA: I thank the hon. Minister for his magnanimity though it is belated. In the month of July last year, the hon. Minister went on record that all the technical feasibility were approved, but since a case was in the court, he could not give the counter guarantee.

I want to ask the hon. Minister whether any court gave a stay order restraining the company from proceeding with their project. Nobody has given the stay order.

MR. SPEAKER: Please put your question.

SHRI R. L. JALAPPA : The "Enron" is cleared by this BJP Government in 13 days regime. It was embroiled in 24 litigations. In spite of that, that was given. Why is this stepmotherly attitude towards us? Secondly, you know what is the reaction of the American Ambassador in India. Have you come across that?

MR. SPEAKER: Please understand. Please put your question.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : If you cannot allow me two minutes, why should we come here?

MR. SPEAKER: After the Statement, you can ask questions only please.

SHRI R.L. JALAPPA : You know that I am not getting up to raise every question.

The US Ambassador to India, Shri Celeste said here on Tuesday that "Cogentrix has sent damaging signals to potential American investors in India." You say that we are going to new millennium in the world. Are you going to convert the Himalayas into a gold mountains with this mindset? So, I request the hon. Minister to see that this is cleared as early as possible without putting any further hurdles. We have wasted seven long years and you still call it as a fast track. This is very bad. I request the hon. Minister to see that this is cleared immediately.

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : One thousand megawatt of power can solve one sixth of the total consumption of Karnataka State. The cost at that time was Rs. 5,000 crore. Because of the negligence of the Government of India, now the cost may be double. The hon. Minister has stated in his statement that counter guarantee can be considered by the Government after receipt of the Supreme Court decision. They have already left Cogentrix people. I want to know whether you are to issue counter guarantee before they come back. The Government will come only if the counter guarantee is given.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: My friend Shri S. Bangarappa has already brought all the points as he was Chief Minister of the State and he has dealt with the subject. The question arises in the statement made by the hon. Minister under the revised procedure for the issue of counter guarantee. The counter guarantee when the Government of India has committed in 1992, when the agreement was signed, is that no State Government can proceed without the support or the consent of the Government of India.

All of us have functioned in the Government and it is not something new to us. So, the Minister cannot hoodwink

us. We are also part of the Government. We know how the Government functions.

Where there is a will, there is a way. If there is a will, they can find a way. Today, this Cogentrix issue is not a subject matter of only Karnataka or Karnataka's interest. One should look at the national level. One should look at what it contributes to the investment climate in the country. It is not a question of one State or the other. If the investment climate and the confidence that you create in the investors' mind are disturbed, just as it has happened in Karnataka today, it might happen in Andhra Pradesh tomorrow and in Uttar Pradesh the day after. So, I would appeal to the hon. Minister, notwithstanding any kind of inhibitions or whatever damage has been done which cannot be set right now, to build confidence in the investors and to remove their doubts and fears so that they can come in, not only in the power sector but in other areas as well, bringing in more investment to the country.

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, now you may reply.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: I am appealing to the hon. Minister. ... (*Interruptions*) This gesture is very mischievous.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : I said, you are too senior for me to stand up while you are speaking.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: I would request the hon. Minister through you to assure the House that he would act in such a manner to identify the problem and find a solution and to see that the clearance is given as quickly as possible. If this is done, the confidence of the investors from overseas can be built up so that more investment can come in, not only in the area of power but in all other areas also. Karnataka has suffered very heavily because of this withdrawal by Cogentrix.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM: Sir, I am very grateful to the hon. Members for having called attention to this important issue in the power sector.

I must at the outset say that you cannot draw comparisons between Enron and Cogentrix for the simple reason that there was no litigation in the case of Enron where any Court held that there is a case for investigation and directed the registration of an FIR and the CBI to investigate in a case of Prevention of Corruption Act. We now have a situation where a charge was given not just with regard to taking a kickback but also with regard to shifting of the project site, with regard to sanctioning environmental clearances and with regard to almost the whole scope of the project. If we had that shadow over us, any counter-guarantee issued will be in the face of a court judgement which openly challenged every decision which was taken with regard to this project.

Today, I am happy to say that the Supreme Court has struck all of it down and vindicated the then State Government and the then Chief Ministers. I must tell Shri Bangarappa that today is a day when he can hold his head high and say, 'I have been cleared by the Supreme Court of these charges. For, these charges — which is without name — sweep across all Chief Ministers including my predecessors.'

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : You have not understood it correctly. Actually, only the MoU was signed in 1992. The agreement came up later on, in 1994. I was not the Chief Minister in 1994. This is just for your information.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : I am aware of that.

It is interesting to know that I am being told, 'Where there is a will, there is a way'. I agree, but it is a misfortune that there was no will and no way between 1992 and 1997. In fact, the procedure for counter-guarantee which was drawn up in those five years was so confusing and so confounding that all the counter-guarantee projects except Enron, which went through a quick, smooth, fast-track, got stuck. It is our Government - when it came last time - that took a decision that this complicated procedure is not called for. It is, after all, the State Governments which are buying the power and so the State Governments should decide how they want the PPAs.

Even today my stand is still very clear that it is the State Government which has to just execute the PPA, send us a copy and give us a certificate that it is as per the laws. That is all. And the moment that is done, the counter-guarantee is executed. I will be going to the Cabinet for the formal clearance which is always required in these matters because the Cabinet had directed me to await the judgment of the Supreme Court. That was the decision of the Government collectively. So, we are taking it up. It is my hope that I should be able to assure the hon. Members that from our side we would intimate the company some time around next week, of the decision.

Let me also make another point clear. Ultimately, it is going to be in the hands of the State Government of Karnataka to decide whether they want this Project or not. We do not have any written communication — I repeat, we do not have any written communication — either from Cogentrix or from China Light and Power. They met me and orally only informed me. They have only been doing Press Releases and Press Conferences; but no communication in writing has been given to us. So, on record, I am proceeding with the impression that they are there as promoters and taking it up.

The Government of India will take urgent steps. We were only waiting for the judgment of the Supreme Court. Now that it has come, we will proceed fast and I can assure

the hon. Members from Karnataka that we are interested to see that this large Project of 1000 MW does come in to assist the State Government of Karnataka in its power-starved situation. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Sir, I want to make one last point.... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the House will take up 'Zero Hour'. Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.

[*Translation*]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL (Balaghat) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with a heavy heart, I would like to inform the House. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, will these people speak only or other Members will also be allowed to speak? ... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : Sir, will he do all the things within a week? He may have to tell the House. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: He has already said it.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : I said that we would intimate the company some time next week. Did you not hear me? ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bangarappa, he said it already.

Now, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.

... (*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN : What is going on. Let me raise this issue. ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to inform the House about a very sad incident. ... (*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : May I know from the hon. Minister whether he would do it within a week, including the clearance of the Cabinet? (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Is there anything from the Minister now? He asks whether you will be able to do it within a week.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI S. BANGARAPPA : He said that he would do everything within a week, including getting permission of the Cabinet, calling all the parties concerned, etc. Is that okay? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : The Government of India's stand on the counter-guarantee would be communicated within a week and there should be no problem; it comes within the policy. But the responsibility of the State Government is not mine. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: No. Now, Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.

12.38 hrs.

RE : KILLING OF A MINISTER IN MADHYA PRADESH

[*Translation*]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL (Balaghat) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to inform the House about a tragic incident that has occurred in Madhya Pradesh. I am a Member of Parliament from District Balaghat. The four Assembly Constituencies of that area are affected by Naxalite Movement. Shri Lakhi Ram Kamre was brutally murdered last night around 1.30 a.m. Late Shri Kamre was the Cabinet Minister of the Government of Madhya Pradesh and was also incharge of District Balaghat. It is not as if he was simply murdered on the spot. His hands were tied behind his back and he was taken two kilometres away from Kimapur which is the headquarter of Assembly constituency and is a Tehsil. Shri Kamre was kidnapped, beheaded, his body was cut into pieces and thrown in front of his house.

12.39

[*MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair*]

The motive behind the murder is not clear. If the Government is of the view that this incident is linked with naxalite movement, I am not going to negate it but at the same time, I am not prepared to believe it also. The reason being that I have also contested Lok Sabha election from that area. No party agents were present at 116 polling centres during the last elections. I sent my party agents. Even I was not provided with security cover. I am not demanding security cover, but I would like to submit that I had intimated the Government that such a situation will arise. This is the first political murder. A Cabinet Minister, who was also incharge of the District and was escorted by security personnel, has been murdered. Such a person is considered to be the Chief Minister of the District. I would like to emphasise that such is the situation that a Minister in office has been murdered. He was kidnapped from his house, taken two kilometres

away from the headquarter and his body was cut into pieces. Still my colleagues are taking it lightly. I spoke to the Chief Minister in the morning. I am an M.P. from that District. I said that I wanted to attend the funeral and could he give me any information in this regard. You should be surprised to know and I state it with regret that Hon'ble Chief Minister did not say anything about accountability. When I speak about the law and order position. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Hon. Members, please resume your seats. I am on my legs.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : He was a minister from my area. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Patel, you have already raised the matter. The Government might have taken note of it.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : I have not completed my submission. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN (Vidisha) : I have also given a notice. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Patel has already raised the matter. There are three or four other hon. Members to associate with what he said just now.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : What is happening? There is no control in Zero Hour.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR (Faizabad) : They are trying to justify it by rising from their seats. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Vinay Katiyar, your name is also there in the list. I will give you a chance to speak.

... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Patel, what do you want from the Central Government on this issue?

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : I want to make two points. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Hon. Members, Shri Patel has brought a very serious matter to the notice of the House. There are three or four other hon. Members to associate with what he has said just now.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : There should not be any objection to it. I would like to make only two points... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Ramdas Athawale, I have to seriously view your conduct.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please tell us, what do you want from the Government.

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR : Please allow him to complete his submission. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am there to regulate the House. You do not have to regulate it. I want the whip of the party to regulate his Members.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : I am telling you that this is not first such incident. Naxalites surrounded the Sonewali Chowki day before yesterday and an exchange of fire continued there for four hours. Hand grenades were also used there. ... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : What do you want from the Government, please tell us.

[English]

There are three or four Members who wish to associate themselves with it.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : I am an M.P. from that area. Would my submission be ignored? I am telling

you that firing took place at Sonewali Chowki for four hours two days ago. This is not the first time that such an incident has occurred. This is 17th or 18th such incident in last two months. My friends here raise objections when I take the name of Chief Minister. I would submit that they should be ashamed of themselves. This is the outcome of the internal conflicts. Law and order position has deteriorated completely. (Interruptions) I demand from the Government... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You will get a chance to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : The Chief Minister of the State should tender his resignation immediately. ... (Interruptions) Despite the presence of DIG, a murder has been committed. Immediate action should be taken.... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : This is 'Zero Hour', not a discussion. You should only say what you want the Government to do.

[Translation]

SHRI PRAHLAD SINGH PATEL : I demand from the Government that the State Government should be dismissed and action should also be taken against the officers. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Scindia, you will get a chance to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with it, but I request that the entire matter should be probed by the CBI. The Minister in the State was murdered due to inner fighting of the Congress Party. ... (Interruptions) In Madhya Pradesh the law and order situation has gone from bad to worse. In case of crimes ... (Interruptions) Shri Digvijay Singh should be dismissed. The Government of Madhya Pradesh should be dismissed and the whole matter should be probed by the CBI.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Pandey, please resume your seat. Nothing will go on record.

... (Interruptions)*

* Not recorded.

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Labour Unions related to Defence production ... (Interruptions) I am speaking on a different issue ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You have given notice in this regard, you want to associate yourself with it.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Pandeyji, you have not given notice to associate. You are a senior Member. He has given the notice, therefore, I have called him.

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR : This is a very serious matter. Associating myself with this matter, I would like to request the Government of India that this matter should be probed by the CBI. This type of incidents are taking place in the Congress ruled State. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Your name is there. I will call your name. You are going to associate yourself with it.

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR: I am standing, and he is not letting me speak. I will also not let him speak at his turn. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Why are you provoking them? You should confine yourself to the subject.

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR: Sir, anarchic situation is prevailing in entire Madhya Pradesh. There is no law and order over there. Here, they pose as united, but in reality there are many differences between them. It is very sad that a Cabinet Minister has been murdered. Hon'ble Members should not get excited, but should share their grief. But it appears today that they are not concerned with it. ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Why are you interrupting when Shri Katiyar is speaking.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR: Sir, I request that the Madhya Pradesh Government should be dismissed, and this matter should be probed by the CBI. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Hon. Members, there are more items and we could go through them also if you maintain peace. There are some more Members who want to participate. Now, Shri Scindia will speak.

... (Interruptions)

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA (Guna) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the incident which has taken place is very sad and I think while discussing this issue, politics should be kept aside on humanitarian grounds. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : This is not the way to behave in the House. When you were speaking, I was controlling the House. Everybody must have patience for hearing.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Nothing will go on record.

... (Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I will not allow anybody to talk like this.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You are not allowing even the Chair to speak. You please sit down. I am on my legs.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please do not interrupt now. There are some more Members to speak.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Again you are getting up.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI KAMAL NATH (Chhindwara) : Sir, a court case in pending against him and he is giving a long lecture here. ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : It is impossible for anybody to conduct this House.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR : Sir, the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs should be called. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : This is too much, Shri Vinay Katiyar. Now please sit down.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Let him speak. He has also given notice. Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, please sit down.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You are a senior member, you should be aware of the fact that when 3-4 Members give notices to speak on the same subject, opportunity is given to all of them. If you have got a chance, then shouldn't they also get it? Will you interrupt them?

... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I will not allow you to speak like this.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Chouhan, please sit down.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI (Khajuraho) : In Delhi, three people are being murdered every second day ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Is there nobody who can control them? Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, if you all behave like this, tell me, how can I conduct this House? You are not allowing even me to speak in this House. When you speak and they interrupt, nothing will go on record and nobody can hear you. When they speak and you interrupt like this, how can I conduct the House? What Zero Hour is this? It is better that we adjourn the House. You all had your say; let him also be heard peacefully. Please do not interrupt him. I appeal to all the three of you – Shri Vinay Katiyar, Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Shri Prahlad Singh Patel.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is for the first time that a Cabinet Minister has been murdered in India. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You have started it again. I think the Parliamentary Affairs Minister should control these people. Shri Pramod Mahajan, Parliamentary Affairs Minister, I seek your cooperation. I just cannot control these two-three Members. I am unable to control them. Please prevail upon them and tell them to keep quiet. How do I conduct the House like this?

* Not recorded.

[Translation]

SHRI VINAY KATIYAR : We only want that the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs should make a statement in this regard. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : We are seeing now that they are disturbing the House. They are doing all sorts of disturbance here and the senior Members are sitting quiet. Members on the Treasury Benches are not allowing the House to continue.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members on the Treasury Benches should not behave like this. It is very unfortunate. All the senior leaders are sitting quiet. They do not even convince them. They all had their say. How do I conduct the House?

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN : A Cabinet Minister is butchered and should we not say anything. ... (Interruptions) Why should the Members of treasury benches remain silent, why can't they speak. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I warn you, do not say such things.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am shocked by the brutal killing, but has this House lost its human feelings. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (Nagpur) : Do you have monopoly on speaking. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : If you do like this, we will not allow anybody from your side to speak in the House. Is it the proper way? ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I warn the Member. He cannot stop any other Member to speak in this House. This is really too much. I am sorry to say this.

... (Interruptions)

13.00 hrs.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : If they do like this, we will also not allow anything to be transacted. ... (Interruptions) How will the House function in this condition? ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Let him say. Please take your seats.

Now, Shri Madhavrao Scindia to speak.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Pradhan, please resume your seat.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : There is a limit for anything.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I was saying that sometimes such sad incidents take place, on which discussion is held in the House keeping aside politics. I have experienced this in thirty years of my parliamentary career. Today, I am shocked. I am surprised that when the matter of this brutal killing is raised, my colleagues are trying to give political colour to it. I would like to appeal. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker Sir, he is wrong. ... (Interruptions) There is no question of politicising it. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Will you not allow him to speak? Please tell me. Mr. Chouhan, will you not obey the Chair?

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: I have never seen this type of atmosphere in the House. ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : What is going on?

... (Interruptions)

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, a senior Member is speaking and he is interrupting. ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : What is political about it? He is giving you a reply.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : It has also gone on record.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Did I object you?

[Translation]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Hon'ble Lakhiram Kaware as an elected MLA was our old colleague. I am sure that my colleagues of ruling party would also be grieved. His brutal killing is a big blow to the humanity. He was our common colleague. We are more hurt than you. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it should be seen in wider context. We jointly have to take stringent measures in this regard. After all, the way he was murdered. ... (Interruptions)

I do not want to bring politics into it. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Let him complete.

... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please resume your seat.

[Translation]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Hon'ble Deputy Speaker, Sir, this was the barbaric murder. Some posters were near the dead body in which a mention was made that they have committed this crime in Madhya Pradesh in retaliation as their four colleagues were killed in fake encounter in another state. We all know that a vast area has been affected by naxalism. Andhra Pradesh is the worst affected state by naxalism. State Government is making efforts in this regard. We cannot say that the State Government is not making any efforts. The problem of the naxalism has taken alarming proportion there. Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra are also being affected gradually by this problem of naxalism. Therefore, we definitely want that ... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : What is this going on today?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Therefore, the incidents which take place in Andhra Pradesh, sometimes have an impact on neighbouring states also. We will have to observe this minutely and we will have to discuss this matter with the Government of Andhra Pradesh. I am of the view that sometimes due to such incidents some places become centres of such activities in the country. Co-ordinated a efforts should be made by calling a meeting of the Chief Ministers of all the four affected States in which the Union Government should also participate. In that meeting we should discuss by rising above party politics as to how we can tackle the core of this problem. It is not good to do politics by raising any issue. It is also not good to denigrate any deceased person by raising such matters. Therefore, I appeal to you that this issue should be considered in wider perspective by rising above these things. Some other issue can affect our state and this can happen any time that issue related to our state can affect some other state.

[English]

These focusses have to be tackled.

[Translation]

I request the hon'ble Minister of Parliamentary Affairs that the Union Government should take initiative in this regard and a coordination committee should be constituted on naxalism so that there could be coordination in this regard irrespective of the fact that such focusses are in East, West or South of the country. This problem should be solved by calling a meeting of the Chief Ministers of all the four states. We have full sympathy with the family affected by this incident and I appeal to all my colleagues that it should be treated on humanitarian considerations.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House stands adjourned to meet again at 2.10 P.M.

1308 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for lunch till Ten Minutes past Fourteen of the clock.

1417 hrs.

The Lok Sabha reassembled after lunch at Seventeen Minutes past Fourteen of the clock

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH in the Chair]

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The proceedings of the House start now.

14.18 hrs.

[English]

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY BILL*

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide legal recognition for transactions carried out by means of electronic data interchange and other means of electronic communication, commonly referred to as "electronic commerce", which involve the use of alternatives to paper-based methods of communication and storage of information, to facilitate electronic filing of documents with the Government agencies and further to amend the Indian Penal Code, the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, the Banker's Book Evidence Act, 1891 and the Reserve bank of India Act, 1934 and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

* Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part II, Section 2, dated 16.12.99.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide legal recognition for transactions carried out by means of electronic data interchange and other means of electronic communication, commonly referred to as "electronic commerce", which involve the use of alternatives to paper-based methods of communication and storage of information, to facilitate electronic filing of documents with the Government agencies and further to amend the Indian Penal Code, the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, the Banker's Book Evidence Act, 1891 and the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 and for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN : I introduce* the Bill.

14.19 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377

(i) Need to provide extension centres of LPG agencies in rural areas

[Translation]

SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH (Mandi): Mr. Chairman Sir, there is no doubt that the Government are making every effort to make cooking gas easily available in rural and inaccessible hilly areas of the country. For this purpose new agencies are being opened at various places so that ever increasing burden on forests fuel could be reduced and the valuable forests wealth of the country could be conserved. It would not be possible until gas agencies are opened at every place in rural areas. Gas agencies which are functioning at present are not providing services to the villages in remote areas. Therefore, it is utmost necessary to provide the facility of extension counter on the recommendations of the administration and the representatives of the people because it is a big problem to take the gas cylinders to villages from the existing gas agencies. The drivers and conductors of the buses refuse to carry these cylinders as LPG is highly inflammable and explosive. The second major problem is that LPG has become costlier now and what to talk about rural areas sometimes even in urban areas under weight gas cylinders are supplied and the innocent villagers are cheated by LPG agencies by supplying under weight gas cylinders. Therefore, I demand that all the gas agencies should be given directions to the effect that the vehicles of the agencies which carry gas cylinders for supply must have weighing machines for taking the weight of the cylinders by the consumers for their satisfaction. There are enormous complaints about supply of underweight gas cylinder in Delhi also and I think there are very few agencies in Delhi which are supplying full weight gas cylinders to the consumers.

Therefore, keeping of weighing machines should be made compulsory for all the LPG agencies functioning not only in rural and remote areas but in urban areas also.

(ii) Need to ensure early functioning of the unit of the Indian Fertilizers Corporation Ltd. Gorakhpur, U.P.

YOGI ADITYA NATH (Gorakhpur) : Mr. Chairman Sir, the Gorakhpur unit of the Fertilizers Corporation Limited was set up in 1969. This fertilizers plant was a boon for the farmers of the eastern Uttar Pradesh but this unit was closed down on June 10, 1990 after an accident which was of general nature. Due to closure of this unit which was situated in an industrially backward area of eastern Uttar Pradesh, there is utter frustration amongst the employees of this unit as well as farmers of this area.

The Government have taken a historical decision to revive the said unit with the help of KRIBHCO in the larger public interest.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we welcome the move of KRIBHCO to set a new plant by utilising the available infrastructure and other facilities in the closed fertilizers unit. While demanding the prompt implementation of the said historical decision, I would like to draw the attention to the Government towards the following points:

1. The salaries of the employees engaged in this unit have not been revised since the closure of the said fertilizers plant. Hence new scales of pay should be given to the employees of this unit as has been given to the employees of other public sector undertakings.
2. The KRIBHCO should absorb the employees already on the roll of the said fertilizer plant.

(iii) Need to make comprehensive plan to prevent recurrence of flood at Itahar, Ratua, Kharba and Raiganj in West Bengal

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : Raiganj Lok Sabha constituency comprises of three districts of West Bengal, namely, Malda, Uttar Dinajpur and Dakshin Dinajpur.

The below poverty level population mostly among the Muslims, SC, ST and OBC, is at the highest level in this area without broad-gauge railway link between Calcutta and Raiganj. The only lifeline, National Highway No. 34, remains pre-occupied with goods and passengers traffic between the North-East and the rest of India. In most places, the road is narrow and in between Nagar Bridge to Main point of Gajola and Itahar, it is so low that during monsoon and flood, it remains under water and the entire road communication gets blocked during this period. Unless the Mahananda division of Malda and the Irrigation Department together with the Water Resource Ministry of the Union Government, make comprehensive proposal to prevent the

* Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

flood of Itahar, Ratus, Kharba and Raiganj Assembly segments, the entire agro-economic prospect and the rural habitation will be destroyed.

- (iv) **Need to provide Financial Assistance to solve the problem of drinking water arising out of blast in Wells by ONGC in Gujarat particularly in Patan district**

[Translation]

SHRI PRAVIN RASHTRAPAL (Patan) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, a project of ONGC is going on in Mahsana district of Gujarat State. Work of this project is spread over the area of Patan district and Chandsabha Taluka which is a part of my Parliamentary Constituency. Boring was done for sinking tubewells to provide water to the people of this area and the number of such tubewells was more than 500 in Patan district alone. Under this project of ONGC blast is done in wells, for production of crude oil and as a result of it the level of water is gradually going down. Now the problem of water has become grim. Generally in our country the damage caused due to any such project is compensated by the Project running authority but so far no compensation has been given by the ONGC to the people of this area to enable them to make proper arrangement for water supply.

I, therefore, request the Government to issue immediate instructions to ONGC to provide compensation to the affected people so that water problem of this area could be solved.

- (v) **Need for early construction of an overbridge at Pedavadiapudi railway crossing in Vijayawada Parliamentary constituency, Andhra Pradesh**

[English]

PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU (Tenali) : Sir, Vijayawada Tenali road in Guntur District of Andhra Pradesh will be crossing Vijaywada-Chennai Railway Grand Trunk Line at Pedavadiapudi village in my constituency. The vehicular traffic on this road is very heavy. Similarly, the frequency of train movement is also very high on this railway line and thereby leading to frequent closure of the railway gate for long spells. This is resulting in piling up of the vehicles in hundreds, on both sides considerably for long time. The traffic clearance even after opening the gate is becoming often difficult. The vehicles with perishable products and the public who need to reach their destination urgently (even for hospitals, etc.) are stranded due to the traffic congestion.

In view of this perennial problem, people in the local area and also in the neighbouring districts have been demanding rail-overbridge for a very long time. Hence, in view of the public importance, demand and urgency, I urge upon the Government to accord sanction on priority for the construction of rail-overbridge at Pedavadiapudi railway crossing early so as to facilitate free movement of vehicular traffic on Tenali-Vijayawada road.

- (vi) **Need to sanction special package for the benefit of Fishermen of Kosi in Saharsa Parliamentary Constituency, Bihar**

[Translation]

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV (Saharsa) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, about 20 lakh acres of land remain inundated by water throughout the year in the Kosi division (Saharsa, Supaul and Madhepura) due to which 40 lakh quintals of foodgrain which otherwise could have been produced, are lost every year.

In this connection, I have demanded from the Government of India that the affected area should be given a special package so as to make them capable of producing fish and 'Makhana'.

Andhra Pradesh supplies most of the fish to Bihar. If due encouragement is given to fishery in Bihar, fish can be sufficient not for the whole Bihar but can also be exported to Bangladesh, Tibet, China and Nepal.

Crores of rupees are being earned from export of 'makhana' to Canada. If a proper action plan is prepared for fishery and 'makhana' production in Kosi area, it will help in earning foreign exchange worth crores of rupees and make the area rich.

The Government, are, therefore, requested to give special package to the State Government so as to boost fish and 'makhana' industry in the State.

- (vii) **Need to take necessary steps for proper maintenance of Circular Railway in Calcutta**

[English]

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (Calcutta North West) : Sir, Circular Railway operates in the city of Calcutta from North to South. It is not an underground project as Metro Railway.

Tremendous traffic hazards cause lives miserable and unbearable in the city of Calcutta. In spite of such intolerable conditions, people are reluctant to use Circular Railway facilities in the city of Calcutta. The Circular Railway stations are not maintained properly, coaches are dirty, untimely arrival-departure, feelings of insecurity in the minds of the passengers inside the compartments; as it passes through a comparatively lonely area of the city and there is no sale of tickets from different Circular Railway stations.

Circular Railway Project of Calcutta is certainly a viable project and if the Railway Ministry takes appropriate

measure, then only it can be saved, otherwise, it will become inoperative soon.

Circular Railway Project is losing its acceptability whereas underground Calcutta Metro Railways have gained tremendous admiration from all sections of the people and the country. The Ministry of Railways should immediately intervene and take all possible necessary steps to develop its infrastructure and see that it runs smoothly and people of Calcutta and its surrounding areas are really benefitted and the traffic congestion of Calcutta is reduced.

(viii) Need to formulate a Central Plan to solve acute Drinking Water problem in Solan, Himachal Pradesh

[Translation]

COL. (RET.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL (Shimla) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Solan city situated on Kalka-Shimla highway can be considered as gateway of Himachal Pradesh. Solan city occupies second position after Shimla which is the capital of this hilly state. The nearby areas of this city are famous for production of vegetable, especially tomato and some fruits.

Sir, in such an important city, general public is facing acute shortage of water. The problem of this city has also aggravated because during the last few years the population of this city has almost doubled. In comparison to higher reaches, the climate of this city is good and thus working class people and those engaged in business have settled there in large number thereby further aggravating this problem.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government towards this problem relating to basic need. I request the Government to solve this long standing problem of the people by supplying the water of Giri river flowing near this town through a Lift Drinking Water Scheme of Central Government.

(ix) Need for early construction of an underbridge at Railway Gate of Khari-Phatak road in Vidisha, Madhya Pradesh

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN (Vidisha) : There is movement of vehicles in large number at the railway gate on Khariphatak road in Vidisha city in my parliamentary constituency. Being an agricultural produce market, thousands of tractors and trollies also come thereby the same road. Several prestigious schools are located there and thousands of students also use this gate for coming to schools. This gate remains closed most of the time due to

movement of trains and as a result of it thousands of people face inconvenience. If an underbridge is constructed near the Khariphatak Road, for which a survey has already been conducted, people may get rid of the inconvenience. This railway gate can be closed after construction of the underbridge to reduce the financial burden on the railways. Therefore, Central Government is requested to take immediate steps to fulfil the required formalities for constructing underbridge there.

(x) Need to provide financial assistance to State Government of Maharashtra to pay salaries of employees of Maharashtra State Road Corporation

[English]

SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI (Ahmednagar) : Sir, the employees of the Maharashtra State Road Corporation are without salary for the first time since the MRTC was formed. The Corporation has made it clear to the employees that it does not have money to pay their salary.

Due to lack of resources and proper policies, the poor employees have to suffer.

I request the Central Government to intervene in the matter and save the employees from starvation by paying the salary to them on time. Adequate financial help should be given to the State Government for this purpose.

(xi) Need to provide irrigation facilities to the farmers residing in places which have been declared "dark blocks"

[Translation]

PROF. S.P. SINGH BAGHEL (Jalesar) : Sir, some blocks have been declared as "dark blocks" by Central Government in view of the falling level of ground water there and these blocks are not being provided with electricity connections for new tubewells and even the subsidy for free boring for the installation of tubewells has been stopped.

I would like to convey to the Government that on the one hand the farmers are already in trouble due to the falling level of ground water and on the other not providing new tubewell connections has made the situation more grim.

Hence the Central Government is requested that the farmers should be given tubewell connections in the blocks which have been declared as "dark blocks" and the canals and the other alternative means of irrigation should be made available there.

1434 hrs.

CODE OF CIVIL PROCEDURE (AMENDMENT) BILL

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now item No. 13— Civil Procedure Code (Amendment) Bill is taken up. Two hours time has been allotted for it.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI) : Sir, I do not think this will require two hours. It may be finished much before that.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN) : That is the maximum time limit. It cannot go beyond that.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI : With the cooperation of this House, I think there should be no problem.

Sir, I beg to move:

“That the Bill further to amend the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, the Limitation Act, 1963 and the Court Fees Act, 1870 as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration.”

Sir, I might mention and all hon. Members of this House will agree and the entire people of India will agree—expect the dishonest litigants who will have a different opinion—that the greatest blot today on the face of our judicial system is the law delays. Everybody has agreed that some drastic steps have to be taken to remove or eliminate the law delays.

A lot of steps are contemplated. The amendment of the Civil Procedure Code is only one of those steps. I do not pretend that this will solve the problem. It is not a complete solution of the problem. But, Sir, it is one good step forward in the direction of the objective which we all hold dear.

I might briefly explain first the sources of wisdom on which this Bill is based. One is that there was a Law Ministers' Conference held in June-July, 1997. This draft paper was considered by them and there was the unanimous support of the Law Ministers' Conference of 1997. Then the Law Commission applied its mind to it and made a comprehensive 129th Report of the Law Commission which suggested some slight amendments and so on. Those were respectfully considered and incorporated. Then we had a Committee of the Parliament on Subordinate Legislation which considered this problem and some of the suggestions they made have also been incorporated.

Then, there was the Justice Mallimath Committee which also had made a very in-depth study of the problems of arrears in courts. The amendments which were suggested by them also find a reflection in this.

So, this is the application of mind of experts which has taken place in the drafting of this Bill. I claim no credit for it. This is one of those Bills which I have inherited. I wish to pay a tribute to the previous Law Minister who brought this Bill before the House but it could not be passed because of the dissolution of the Lok Sabha. Now, it has been passed by the Rajya Sabha and it is here for consideration.

We have reduced the timeframe for service of summons and return of the response of the parties. We have insisted on filing of Affidavit so that anybody who makes a false claim or a false defence is liable to prosecution, for perjuries. This will discourage false defences. Then we have provided for quick service and quick written statement and defence being filed.

The most important part of this amendment is that a part of it is really a sequel to the new arbitration law, modernised arbitration law which is in accordance with the international standards of arbitration which was passed by Parliament in 1996 and some consequential provisions have to be made. We have almost made it now compulsory for the courts before trying a suit, to refer it out for conciliation, mediation and arbitration. This is the latest philosophy of settlement of disputes or the alternative dispute-settlement mechanism. We have incorporated it in the Civil Procedure Code.

Then, there is a facility for recording evidence. We have borrowed this from the English and American practices. The courts have really no time these days particularly in view of the number of courts which we require. The Law Commission has said that we have to increase the number of judges by five times. For every one judge today, there have to be five Judges which means four more Judges have to be appointed. Allowing most of the evidence to be produced in the form of Affidavit first of all and then the other side can always cross-examine that shortens delays and if there is to be recording of evidence, it can take place before the Commissioners rather than the court. So, this is really increasing the number of courts without technically increasing them and that also will be a very, very serious step.

A complaint was made the other day in this House that people obtain injunctions or interim orders from the court *ex parte* and then try to delay the proceedings so that the courts have no time to consider these things and injustice is perpetrated and sometimes serious damage is caused. We have provided that he who asks for interim relief will give security for compensating the other side if his application turns out to be frivolous or he does not wish to prosecute it.

Then we have disposed of one tier of appeal. In the High Court if an appeal is decided by a single Judge of the Court, then appeal will directly lie to the Supreme Court.

[Shri Ram Jethmalani]

We are abolish the intermediate appeal in the High Court, to two judges of the Court. The High Courts, by their rule-making power, can insist that writ matters can come before a Division Bench so that the first decision itself is by two judges, by which way the appeal will go to the Supreme Court.

Sir, we have provided an incentive to settlement that if you really settle a dispute and do not trouble the court, there will be full refund of the court fees which you have paid so that this is going to be some kind of an incentive to the parties to settle the dispute.

I submit that this is a very non-controversial measure. If any hon. Member has further suggestions to make, they will be respectfully considered. We are prepared to incorporate them in a further amendment to the Civil Procedure Code. But this Bill, as passed by the Rajya Sabha, may now be passed by this House so that it does not have to go back and we waste time. Sir, we have a very little time left. I am most anxious that this law should come into force. Of course, it will come into force in some cases with retrospective effect, but wherever the prospective operation is insisted upon, that is expressly provided.

So, I commend this Bill for consideration and passing.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Motion moved:

"That the Bill further to amend the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908, the Limitation Act, 1963 and the Court Fees Act, 1870, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL (Chandigarh) : Mr. Chairman Sir, during the last 30 years, there has been an incredible increase in the volume of litigation that the courts of our country have had to deal with. It may be because of the rise in population, the rise in level of awareness among the people about their rights and the increasing complexities and dimensions of the laws that we are enacting over the years and also the complexity and dimensions of the human activity, but the fact remains that all these factors have contributed significantly in flooding the courts with new cases while the old ones continue to be stacked in the shabby shelves which, as we experienced in Chandigarh, are exposed to the risks like that of a fire.

Sir, with over two crore of cases pending in all the courts, the justice-delivery system - the hon. Minister would agree with me - itself is under severe strain. Only the other day, he informed us, in reply to a question, that at present, there are 32 lakh cases pending in the various High Courts, alone and over 20,000 cases are pending in the Supreme Court itself. Sir, imagine the plight of a litigant who wastes away, who melts away his entire life-span in pursuing a case right from the lower court up to the Supreme Court and then, has to suffer a remand, a situation where the case actually takes

over 40 years in culmination. These exasperating delays, coupled with the expense involved, are sheer back-breaking.

I am happy that the hon. Minister has taken cognizance of that and has brought forward this Bill for discussion in this House at the earliest possible opportunity which aims at cutting the proverbial "laws' delays", which in fact leads to denial of justice, as we have often experienced. Sir, the situation, we all agree, is very grave. It is not finding fault with the hon. Minister. I am convinced with his determination to see that, as I said the other day also, the laws of the country really work; we all owe an explanation to the poor litigants that our response to the gravity of the situation has not been commensurate with the problem.

The hon. Minister while piloting the Bill referred to the need to increase the strength of the judges five-fold.

Well, Sir, maybe, there are constraints, like resources, which should not come in the way, when the question of delivery of justice comes. But I have a point to make and I would expect something immediate even from the hon. Minister, who is a legal luminary and who has a long experience in these things himself. Why do we take inordinately long time in filling the vacancies? We know always in advance that a particular judge of the High Court has to retire on such and such a date. In normal course, if you really mean business, the procedure for filling that vacancy should start, at least, six months before the vacancy arises. But what really happens is that the judge retires, no steps are taken to fill in the vacancy, or if steps are taken, there is a lot of procedural wrangling or the files keep shuffling from the court to the Chief Minister, to the Law Ministry, to the Home Ministry, and it goes on. We are faced with situation where the High Courts have to function with greatly depleted strength of judges, and if that happens, the result would be only what we have before. Sir, the cases keep piling up, new cases are filed without any decision, and more and more arrears of cases pile up. Today, we are facing a situation where even those regular second appeals, which, of course, he is doing away with now I would welcome that even those paltry matters take over 20 years to mature for hearing in the High Courts. The appeals filed in the early 1980s have yet not been taken up. That is the situation which we have, and that would only lead to the frustration amongst the litigants.

Sir, when the hon. Minister referred to the need of increasing judges, I was reading somewhere that, perhaps, there was a recommendation or a demand by the Chief Justice of India that, at least 5,000 judges in the lower courts should be appointed. Only then, we will be able to cope with the volume of work which we presently have to face. Besides, as I was trying to make that point, creation of new posts is one thing, filling of the existing vacancies is another thing. If we do not really come up to that, I think, we have to blame ourselves for a situation like that. Sir, I was talking of the High Court judges, that there are always inordinate delays

in filing vacancies there. The hon. Minister would also appreciate that even in the courts below, at present, there are over a thousand vacancies. If I am not mistaken, if my information is not incorrect, there are over 1,000 vacancies even in the lower judiciary.

Sir, today, when we boast of the strides that we have made in the field of science and technology when we have a new Ministry carved out, that is of Information Technology which has revolutionised our action, thought and vision, despite the fact that there are certain amendments now suggested which would cut delays here and there, everywhere in the procedure involved in the decision of cases, the picture which the courts below present today is that of utter chaos. We all talk of information technology, as I was saying, but go to any of the courts below, go to any moffusil court, you will have typewriters of Adam's days, which are 50 years or 60 years or 70 years or 80 years old. Those are the gadgets on which the poor judgment writer has to type out the judgment and hand it over to the litigant. If the litigant makes photocopies of that, the judges of the High Court would throw them away because those are not comprehensible or are illegible altogether. So, when we make provisions like this, when we provide in this present Bill I again commend that that the copies of the judgments have to be delivered immediately on pronouncement, I think, at the same time, greater emphasis should be there on providing the necessary infrastructure to all the courts.

Sir, it is a pity that our investment of Judiciary, all inclusive, is a meagre 0.2 per cent of our GNP. Justice has to be delivered; justice has to be imparted to the people; it is not be sold. I am against the increase in the Court fees. We already have very high Court fees. It is the responsibility of the State. This is one of the basic functions which the State must undertake to perform; and equip all the Courts, all over the country, with the latest gadgets.

Sir, there is a provision being made for issuing and service of summons through couriers, E-mail and Fax. I welcome that. But where is the infrastructure? I think, all these things—these would not cost much—should be provided for in all the Courts. The earlier practice of handing over the summons to the litigants and asking them to send them by registered post and then deliver the copy of the receipt to the Registry of the Courts should not really be adhered to again. But I find something like that again, that a man at his own cost, besides depositing the summons fee in the Registry, would be called upon to ensure that it is delivered at his expense. I think that would leave some room for manipulation and other things, as it often happens that some fraud is played some time. All these E-mail and Fax facilities should be provided for in the Courts so that immediately when the judges order the issuance of summons, those are sent from the Courts itself.

Sir, I referred to certain demands made by the Head of the Judiciary, that is, the Chief Justice of India. I think, he is right when he bemoans or perceives some sort of an apathy on the part of the Government towards the judicial administration. These are matters with which he is concerned. We do expect the Judiciary to deliver goods. But at the same time, all the necessary basic infrastructure has got to be provided to them without any loss of time. That is my humble submission.

Sir, I referred to the various contributory factors which have led to this barrage or flood of litigation in the Courts. This has, as I said earlier, something to do with the radical changes in the pattern of litigation. What we can do now is to have comprehensive exercise in doing away with the archaic laws that we have. Only the other day, the hon. Minister was informing us here that, perhaps, there are over a thousand such laws which do need amendment or complete abrogation. I know, it is a very stupendous task. It cannot be carried out overnight. But this has to be done on a war-footing. It should not be that a small cell is created which would take up one law from time to time, when we would take years to do that. One major exercise has to be carried out immediately.

Sir, I find that while we are concerned about this, at the same time, when we are framing new laws, we are referring to the provisions of the old laws. The other day we were discussing the Prevention of Money Laundering Bill. There, we were referring to some laws, like the FERA which was replaced by FEMA that very day. This is, of course, a very minor thing. I should not take the time of the House by mentioning that. What I mean to say is that we have got to carry out an in-depth study of all the laws and wherever there is a need to amend or do away with a particular provision we must do it at the earliest.

Sir, without any reservation I commend this present exercise which is aimed at doing the same thing. The Code of Civil Procedure has had so far many in-built provisions which have led to delay in delivering judgements in the cases. The procedure, as it is being simplified now, is the right step in the right direction. It meets, to a certain extent, a long-felt need to simplify the procedural law. I think, when these amendments are brought into force there will be some gearing up of the courts and picking up of speed in deciding the cases.

I feel that these amendments would certainly knock down certain devices being presently used by the unscrupulous litigants, the section of the society which hon. Minister referred to as perhaps the only one section which may not like these present amendments. Over the years what we have seen is that amendments were being sought on frivolous grounds. Now, the mandate would be, "no more amendments of pleadings than three in all and for a total period of not exceeding one month." I think that is fair enough.

[Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal]

Recording of evidence which would now be drastically changed is a welcome step. The evidence would initially be recorded through affidavits, thereafter before the Commissioners who could be lawyers of that court. In any case, the judge trying the matter would refer it to one of the persons on a panel prepared for that purpose. That would certainly save time and expense. Evidence would be recorded outside, transmitted to the file and the matter thereafter would be decided by the Court.

Experience has shown that amendment of pleading has also been in the past resorted to on quite a few occasions by the litigants to delay the proceedings. But, Sir, permit me to say that despite that this is one invaluable right which should be retained with the litigants. I do not have much difficulty with present amendments as such. But, I have suggested one amendment to the provision which seeks to omit Rules 17 and 18 of Order VI which relate to the amendment of pleadings. I know that Section 153 is the substantive provision in the Code of Civil Procedure which gives the right to the litigant to move for an amendment. But, I think, if we go by the wording of Section 153 as also these two Rules 17 and 18, these later provisions are more elaborate, more explicit and more clear. Therefore, Sir, I thought that while we should be concerned with this being used as a device by people to delay the proceedings, at the same time this right has to be retained. Therefore, I thought that Order, VI, Rule 17 should be retained and there should be an amendment to only Order VI Rule 18 whereunder we could limit or restrict this right of amendment. At the moment this takes inordinately long time. Against the Order permitting or refusing to file or to make an amendment, a person goes to the High Court to file a revision petition and when interlocutory proceedings begin a lot of time is again taken. I think that could be restricted. But this provision as such should be retained for the benefit of the public.

15.00 hrs.

Take the case where a person dies leaving behind young children. They may have no idea as to what was his property, what was his interest, where was that property, and all that. If they file a suit somewhere, subsequently while going through the papers at their residence, they come across some more piece of supportive evidence to lay a better claim of something. Then, what will happen? I know, Section 153 could be invoked about the deletion of these provisions. I would be grateful if the hon. Minister clarifies that. But if we were to have all the rights to amend then why did we do away with these provisions? We should make an appropriate amendment there and retain these provisions. That is my humble submission.

Sir, here I agree with the hon. Minister. The best thing that I find in the present amendment is that henceforth, emphasis would be laid on the alternative dispute-resolution course cost. Sir, there was a time when the courts did not

consider it acceptable. They did not even consider it acceptable to talk of the resolution of disputes otherwise than through their good offices. They would not tolerate anything. Then came the time when the law of arbitration came into force, and somehow that was also accepted. Well, certain disputes could be settled through arbitration, but as we know, many problems always cropped up, and that law did not really take off. But the law relating to arbitration, which we presently have on the Statute Book, is a good piece of legislation which was brought about four years back.

Sir, I think, now it will be a real refreshing change to find the courts first referring the matters to arbitration, conciliation, mediation, etc., and thereafter, in case, the matter is not sorted out or not solved, will come back to courts again.

Certainly, recourse to arbitration over these long drawn court proceedings, as we have always experienced, bogged down by procedural wrangles would really be a good change in our procedural system. Sir, with this provision being incorporated in the Civil Procedure Code, I think, we can now look forward to a hassle-free, just and expeditious disposal of cases.

There is another good thing. There may be some need to make rules regarding refund of the court fee. In case, the matter is referred for alternative dispute resolution and it is so resolved there, then elaborate rules have got to be made for that, that the court fee, subtracting only the incidental expenses which are incurred on the arbitration etc., which, may be the arbitrator fixes himself, should be refunded. But that should not be more than the court fee. In all such cases, the court fee should be refunded forthwith to the litigants.

Sir, as we have again seen, the delays are also caused by the fact that a right has been accorded to the litigants to keep on challenging the orders of the court below, in the High Court—appeal, appeal against that appeal, LPA, and then SLP in the Supreme Court etc. I commend this provision where the pecuniary limit for filing the second appeal is raised to Rs. 25,000. That is my first point.

My second and the most important point is about curtailing the right to appeal against the judgment of a single judge to the same High Court. This is a good provision. This would certainly reduce the burden on the High Courts. Sir, I made a mention of the attitude of the Government while participating in the debate on the last Bill and I would like to reiterate that point again that today, undoubtedly, the Government is the biggest litigant in the country. It is no surprise that it is also the biggest loser.

Here again the hon. Minister would correct me if I am mistaken because my information is based only on the news items appearing in the media from time to time that over 90 per cent of the Government cases fail. Often we find that the individual and ordinary litigant is dragged to the courts in many many cases only as an ego trip of the concerned bureaucrat. They feel : "This man is challenging my order.

All right. He has won in the first court and so I must drag him to the second court." This attitude of the Government has to change. The Cell within the Government may be fortified, may be expanded, may be strengthened. They should decide there and if an honest decision is taken, no honest officer need fear anybody when he is writing on the file that this case need not be proceeded with further and nobody would question him. Ego hassles may be the reason today, as I have said. The second is to pass on the buck "Why do I care? Why should I give some opinion that this case need not be taken further to the court?" Why should not they? That is the responsibility and that is their duty to perform. If they feel that there is nothing in the case, they should not go for that. I think to change the environment regarding litigation in the country, the hon. Minister would really find support from all sections of the House and from outside also, if the Government were to decide that they cut down their expenditure on litigation and cases are not filed the way they are now filed. Perhaps we have never given a serious thought to it, but I am sure the hon. Minister would now come out with a litigation policy for the Government.

Sovereignty vests with the people. The State only represents the people and all its actions are to be for the ultimate good of the people. Why should, therefore, instrumentalities of the State keep preferring these appeals from one court to another? I would like to say – I have not moved an amendment to that effect – that the right to move files for filing an appeal should vest with an Officer only if he gives in writing the reasons for preferring an appeal in public interest. Of course, as I have said, the Government always proclaim that its avowed object is to work for the good of the people. I can understand if a case involves interpretation of law, it is fine and good enough, because that is in the public interest. But just now I have said, if an officer does not agree with a particular decision given by the court, on fact alone should be still file an appeal.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : I have taken time to refer to this particular tendency. There are not many speakers from our side. Kindly give me more time. I would like to refer to one or two points before going by your command and resuming my seat.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your taking too much time will delay the things.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL : It will be good if you give us more time.

[English]

There is a provision made here that wherever there is a pronouncement of the judgment, the copy of the judgment

would be made available simultaneously. This is a very good provision. But I do not know. I have only a lurking doubt in my mind that when the judge dictates the judgment in the court, does he make the pronouncement then and there only or not? If it is not, then it will be difficult to give the copy there and to know from when would the period of limitation start running because that provision is also being removed from the Statute Book about the time given to a person to obtain the copies of judgment etc.

One more good provision I must refer to is that there is a new provision for an inspection before the institution of a suit. This is a good provision. To avoid certain subsequent delays, a person can approach the Court immediately and the property about which he intends to file may be got inspected by a commission. This is a good provision.

It further says that the person who is competent to file a suit must file it within seven days. In the notes to the clauses of the Bill it is said that if that person is away some other member of the family may move the application. In that event, I think, this period has to be increased because if a person is away and somebody files an application, it would then entail the filing of the suit within seven days which may not be physically possible. Since the hon. Minister said that he would welcome suggestions, this is only a suggestion because it should not work as a hardship on a person wanting to file a suit subsequently.

To conclude, I would only say that a good beginning has been made as far as the Code of Civil Procedure is concerned. A similar approach is immediately called for regarding the disposal of criminal cases also. It is a pathetic situation that for very petty offences people rot in the jails for years together. Matters are not taken up for long periods of time. For the smallest discrepancy, the person has to remain behind the bars as undertrials. For very small offences, for which even the possible duration of sentence might have run out, they are not able to come out. Since today's matter relates only to the Code of Civil Procedure, I do not want to refer to that but I would, as a passing reference, urge the hon. Minister to immediately bring forth an amendment to that effect also. I would also urge the hon. Minister at the same time to desist from the tendency overtaking the Government today that whenever you make some law, you provide for elaborate procedure therein. I can understand that it is called for in some special cases. Otherwise, we should stick to the simple laws which are easy to understand and administer and avoid making multiplicity of procedural laws.

With these words, I welcome this piece of legislation. I support the Bill requesting the hon. Minister once again to kindly refer to my doubt about the amendment of pleadings.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Sir, generally, I have to support the Bill in the sense that it is a partial attempt to prevent the delay in the administration of

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan]

justice. How far will we succeed in this present attempt is a matter to be seen. It is, as I said, only a partial attempt. I wish the Minister all success but there are many more things to be done here.

The judiciary, as a whole, will have to be reconstructed. The delay is not procedural alone. It is due to some other reasons as well. Now, in the first case, it may be borne in mind that the appointment of judges to the higher judiciary is one of the convincing reasons for the delay.

If I remember correctly, in a statement by the hon. Chief Justice of India, at present, there are about 154 vacancies left in the various High Courts and only about 40 cases are under active consideration. The remaining about 114 are still undecided. That is the experience of the higher judiciary. Then, with regard to the lower judiciary, the position is entirely alarming and if I remember correctly, the lowest judiciary risk is in India.

There is nothing to be compared between the population and the process of judicial arbitration. So, I would request my hon. friend, the Law Minister to bring in a legislation for speedy disposal of cases. I was a lawyer for over 40 years and I have my own bitter experiences. I had come across many civil cases which were filed during the British period and pending for decision for over 50 years. That was my experience. This must be the experience of so many people throughout India. So, we will have to change the system as a whole. We are following the Anglo-Saxon jurisprudence; it is not suited to our country.

Even today we are basing many decision on oral evidence. Collecting oral evidence is a cumbersome affair. We will have to change the evidence system as a whole. The Indian Evidence Act which is the primary method of deciding cases is outdated. We are on the threshold of the new millennium and we will be governed by the rules of computers. We will have to admit as evidence even the technical data, now that the information technology is available.

I welcome the move which was just made by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, for inclusion of evidence given by computers. It is quite welcome. In our country, evidence is admissible only in a restricted sense. Hearsay evidence is inadmissible and oral evidence will be admissible only when the person giving evidence has the first hand knowledge. These are some of the matters which require immediate attention and immediate remedy.

Another aspect that I would like to bring to the kind attention of the hon. Minister is that the judicial powers will have to be decentralised. We are living in an age of decentralization. You know that we have changed the system as a whole in the Executive by three-tier Panchayat Raj system. By that, we have decentralised the Executive powers to a very large extent. But even today, the judicial powers

are centralized. For redressal of a grievance of an individual, one has the course open even to approach the Supreme Court.

I would suggest that disputes between individuals can be settled at a lower level. Why should he go to the Supreme Court? Only matters related to involvement of individual freedom or fundamental rights or the basic structures of the Constitution, should go to that Court and then only there would be some meaning in taking them to the Apex Court. There are matters like property disputes or other disputes between individuals which are being unnecessarily taken to the Supreme Court as well as to the High Courts which takes a number of years to their disposal. So, such things should be prevented and avoided by decentralizing judicial powers.

Decentralization will not hurt the feelings of the Apex court because if everything goes to the Apex Court, it would be detrimental to the interests of the democratic set up in our country. So, I think, the hon. Minister would consider the aspect of decentralization of powers. In that direction, I may submit that I agree with the present Government's proposal for appointment of a Judicial Commission.

The Judicial Commission is quite essential at present because the appointment of judges are left entirely to the Apex Court as well as the higher judiciary. The system should change. It is for an independent agency; it must be a Constitutional agency with full powers of appointment to the higher judiciary; and I feel that even transfers should be referred to the Judicial Commission. So, I would request the hon. Minister to bring in a legislation for the appointment of a Judicial Commission without delay.

In the present context, I may draw your attention to the fact that recently there is an attempt by the highest Judicial body to evolve a Code of Conduct. According to them, that Code of Conduct would be an in-house procedure, it does not have legal sanctity and it does not have any legal basis. The judges themselves would sit together and decide as to how they should act in future. It does not have any bearing on the society. The in-house procedure is not sufficient. That is why, the appointment of Judicial Commission is the most essential at present. That must have led these people to think in terms of Code of Conduct. At the same time they say that it would be an in-house procedure. But it is not acceptable.

We are still following the Contempt of Court Act. It is giving a blanket protection to the judiciary as a whole. They can do anything. The judiciary can act in any manner it likes. The citizens have no voice to make even healthy criticism. It is not permissible. In America, judges could be criticised, their actions could be criticised, and even their judgements could be criticised, but in India nobody is allowed to criticise the judgement or the absence of the judges in their official capacity. They are beyond criticism. The Contempt of Court Act is a colonial Act. Why should we not change this Act? It is unsuitable to the democratic constitution. So, we have to take immediate steps and amend the present Contempt of

Court Act. Then only can we speak about judicial accountability. If we retain the Contempt of Court Act, how can we speak about the judicial accountability? So, we have to change the Contempt of Court Act basically to make the judges accountable to the society. No democratic society will give a licence to judiciary to act in whatever manner they like to act. I appreciate and applaud the position taken by the judiciary in many ways. They upheld the provisions of the basic features of the Constitution. In all these respects, the judiciary has to be commended. But that would not be a ground for holding that the judiciary is unaccountable. I would say that the judiciary also is accountable.

In this background, I may be permitted to make certain suggestions. Now, under Section 89 you have three choices, viz. arbitration, conciliation and judicial settlements, including settlements through Lok Adalats and mediation. What I would like to suggest is that, it should lead to further delay in providing justice. If the cases are referred to a particular authority and, suppose that authority finds that it is not within its jurisdiction, it sends the cases back. So, transferring the cases once again would cause delay and we have to prevent that delay. Please make some provisions in the rules that cases once delayed should not be re-transferred without proper and valid reasons. It should not be a delaying tactics. Municipal Courts or judges will send the cases to the Arbitration authority or the Adalats and the Adalats, on finding it difficult to settle them there, will send them back which would cause further delay in settling the cases. So, the purpose for which this amendment is passed will be defeated. So, I would suggest that there must be some safeguards with regard to the application or enforcement of Section 89. There must be safeguards to prevent the delay.

So far as appeal by the Central judge is concerned, I would say that we all live in a society. We are, all human beings. We have our own feelings. We have our political leniency. A judge is a person who comes from a particular State under a particular political influence. He will have his own feelings. Suppose a judge is giving a judgement in a writ petition, where can one appeal? We can appeal to the Division Bench. Division Bench can correct if at all there is any illegality or irregularity. But what is the remedy when that is taken away in certain cases? Petition must be maintainable in the Supreme Court and the writ petitioner should show that there is illegality with regard to the decision. Beyond that he cannot act. But this happens very rarely. So, I would suggest that we should make a comprehensive provision in the sense that a single judge's decision is not appealable. We will have to make some safeguard.

You have adopted the most important procedure of filing an Affidavit. In our State, we know what sort of Affidavits have been filed by the different Chief Ministers from time to time. The Minister is quite aware of it. So, if a case proceeds on the basis of an Affidavit being filed, it is not at all

commendable. Moreover, in this context, I may add that Notary Public is all right to record evidence or act as commissioner in taking evidence. But that has to be followed with abundant caution because there are a number of complaints about the Notary Public. If they are given power to take evidence, it will make the decision-making process most difficult.

As the matter passes, I would say that it will create difficulty. We should be very vigilant about that. I do agree that the pronouncement of the judgement should be on the same day when it is delivered. Our present experience is, it takes two or three months to make the pronouncement. They take it for disposal but no judgement comes within a period of two or three months. This is our experience. So, the proposal, to pronounce judgement on the day it is posted for disposal, is quite welcome.

With regard to decree, there is some difficulty. We have been given 15 days' time. Until and unless we sanction sufficient staff to the courts, it is not practicable. Most of the courts working in our country are not sufficiently staffed. They do not have sufficient strength. If this is to be enforced, we will have to think in terms of strengthening the judiciary with sufficient staff and sufficient infrastructure.

The Government has fixed, 25,000 as the limit for non-appealable cases. Beyond that, appeal is allowed. This is welcome step. But, in the changed circumstances I think it is a very small amount. We will have to raise it to at least 50,000.

Why should it be Rs. 25,000? After all when this statute came into force, it was Rs. 5,000. Why not raise it to Rs. 50,000? I think it is a small amount and we will have to raise it. It is because all these cases will be taken in appeal.

Now filing of witness schedule along with the plaint is also quite welcome because there will be no posting for filing evidence or for filing witness schedule and all that. I do agree with this.

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would request the hon. Member to talk of those measures which are not welcome as it would save time. We all agree on those measures which are welcome. Let us talk of the differences.

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : With regard to execution of summons, there will be difficulty in the present set up. We will have to overcome that by subsequent amendments because the plaint is asked to take summons within two days. That would definitely create difficulties. If seven days' time is given, it is all right. But two days time is very less. So, justice should not be denied in the name of delay. Now, two days time is permissible in the present amendment. But seven days' time is reasonable.

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan]

As per clause 26, you have provided three adjournments. But what about the cost? No definite proposal is forthcoming? First application is allowable, but what is the cost? The second adjournment is also allowable and the third adjournment which is the final adjournment is also allowed. But you have not specifically provided whether it is high cost. I find no mention of it in the rules. I am sorry to say that. But if I am wrong I am prepared to correct it. There is no such provision in the Bill. If this provision would be made in the rules, that is quite welcome. So, there are other matters with which I am not dealing now.

In conclusion, I welcome the measure in the sense that it will prevent delays. Such a measure is quite essential in dealing with criminal cases also. I think he will be bringing another amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code in the near future. That is also quite essential. So far as the determination of civil cases is concerned, to some extent, the amendment is quite welcome and I hope that the Government will be very serious in implementing these decisions. I hope the Civil Procedure Code Act will be implemented with all sincerity and people will be given a feeling that justice is not denied to them. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI RASHID ALVI (Amroha) : Sir, I support and welcome the Bill with certain suggestions. It is an effort in the right direction. But I have to say that it is a small effort in the right direction as we have to think about the entire system. This system does not suit to this country.

Sir, whether it is judicial system or system of bureaucracy or system of police, the basic problem with our system is that they are adopted by us which were given by the British rulers.

All these are adopted by us as given by the British rulers. The British rulers created this whole system to make us slaves. We got Independence and without giving a serious thought we have adopted it as it is. This present judicial system does not suit this country and the common man of this country.

Delay in justice is certainly one of the problems. But the system is so complicated that for a common man or a poor person, it is difficult to get justice in this country. It is shameful on our part if I say that even after 52 years of Independence it is mentioned in the Punjab Jail Manual as to what shall be the uniform of an European jailor and what shall be the uniform of an Indian jailor. I want to bring this fact to the knowledge of the House as well as the hon. Minister. Alcohol consumption is allowed for an European prisoner whereas it is not allowed for an Indian prisoner inside the jail. We have never thought about it. It is shameful on our part.

I do not want to discuss now about the system of bureaucracy and the system of police. But I want to say

that even today, after 52 years of Independence, a District Magistrate is more or less like the Chief Minister of a district. Just after having qualified an examination he is ruling over the whole district. The post of District Magistrate was created by the British people to keep all of us continuously slaves. Even today we have adopted the same system. A common man, say an autorikshaw driver or a person lying on footpath, cannot approach a District Magistrate. He cannot dare enter his house which is like a palace. A poor autorikshaw driver cannot approach a Superintendent of Police. Not only poor people, even if a Member of the Legislative Assembly who is elected by more than two to three lakh people or a Member of Parliament who is elected by nearly twelve lakh people goes to a District Magistrate, especially if he is in the opposition, he cannot get justice from the District Magistrate. We will have to think over the whole system. My suggestion is that this House should constitute a Commission in this regard.

I remember, in Supreme Court a dispute involving 18 acres of land which was filed in 1863 came up for hearing in 1993, after 130 years. The Supreme Court, after hearing the case, referred it back to the High Court. I have visited so many countries where I was told that in a criminal case a judge is empowered to visit the spot of the crime. He calls the accused to the spot; he calls the witness to the spot and decides as to what is right and what is wrong at the spot. It takes hardly three or four days, at the most a week. I do not want to take much time of the House. This sort of a system may be dangerous. I am not the final authority. The country which I referred to is Libya. I am not saying that we should adopt the system as it is. That was the reason why I was not naming the country.

But what I want to say is that we should adopt whatever good things that are happening in the world.

I want to narrate the incident of one criminal case. One person killed his wife knowingly well that it was wrong. After that, he was full of emotion and sentiments. Straightaway, he went to the police station and confessed that he had murdered his wife. Later on, he realised the very fact that he had done something wrong. He felt that he should not have confessed that before the police officer in the police station. He then engaged a good lawyer. That lawyer cross-examined that particular police officer who had put the accused behind the bars. The hon. Minister himself is a very good criminal lawyer. He knows this very fact very well. As I was telling, the lawyer cross-examined the police officer. He asked one question. He asked the police officer that when the accused came to him and made a confession, was it true that the police officer offered a cup of tea? That police officer was full of fears and he was scared of his job. He immediately said that it was not possible and he did not offer a cup of tea to the accused. Then, again, the lawyer asked the police officer whether he put the accused behind the bars and took

the statement. The police officer said: "Yes, I took his statement." The point is that in the eyes of law, if anybody, is making a confession under pressure is no confession at all. Just on this very ground, he was released while the court knew the very fact, the area knew the very fact that the accused himself had made the confession that he had murdered his wife. So, what I am saying is that the system is not fully suitable to this country.

1542 hours

[SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU *in the Chair*]

Mr. Chairman, my request is that we should think over it and we should constitute a Commission.

Now, I want to give some suggestions. As far as this Amendment Bill is concerned, the hon. Minister has made a provision in Section 10 by saying:

"... by a Single Judge of High Court, no further appeal shall lie from the judgement, decision or order of such Single Judge."

It is all right. It will make speedy decision possible. But my submission is that a common man is living far away from Delhi. He may be living in Manipur, South India, Kerala etc. It will be difficult for him to get justice. It is very expensive to get justice from the Supreme Court. It will be very difficult for such a person to come to Delhi to file an appeal and get justice. I think the hon. Minister should reconsider it and the provision should be there that such a person must be allowed to go to a D.B. He can get justice there also.

As far as Clause 2 is concerned, it is stated: "In every plaint, facts shall be proved by Affidavit." My amendment is as follows: "If facts shall be supported by the Affidavit."

The third point is that this Amendment Bill has empowered the Oath Commissioners to record the evidence. The reputation of the Oath Commissioners has never been good in this country. I am not making allegations against every Oath Commissioner. But this is the procedure that just after having stamped on a paper, he charge rupees five or ten. It is his habit. In serious cases, if he is allowed to record the evidence, then it will not at all be good and it will be difficult to get justice.

There is one more thing which I want to say. Our system should be like this that a common man should have full belief in the judiciary. I want to narrate one incident here that in 1998 in Uttar Pradesh, one of the Chief Ministers came to occupy the office for just one or two days. He went to the Allahabad High Court. Just within 24 hours, he got an order and he took the charge in Uttar Pradesh again.

But when the BSP filed a case in the Supreme Court under the provision of the Anti-Defection Law and it came

up before a Bench of three judges in the Supreme Court, one judge was of the opinion that this party is right and these MLAs would cease to be Members. At the same time, another judge was against it and the then Chief Justice of the Supreme Court was of the opinion that this case should be referred to the Constitution Bench. I think it will come up after five years and God knows better when it will come.

Sir, I remember one case where an industrialist, Shri Thaper got bail during the night, at 12 o'clock from the Supreme Court. He did not bother to go to the District Court, he did not go to the High Court; instead he went to the Supreme Court and got bail late in the night, at 12 o'clock from the residence of the Supreme Court judge. Such type of cases creates so many doubts in the minds of the people. So, my submission is, if the common man of the country leaves his fate in the judiciary it will be the worst day for the democracy and for our country. In the end, I, once again, request that a Commission should be constituted to reconsider the system in the country.

SHRI V.P. SINGH BADNORE (Bhilwara): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Code of Civil Procedure (Amendment) Bill. I think, this Bill is really praiseworthy. Nobody could have piloted it better and would have done a better job than the hon. Minister. Firstly, I suppose, it is his dream that he can come up with a Bill like this, to shorten the procedure for getting justice. There is a famous saying that 'justice delayed is justice denied' and that is what, I suppose, must be at the back of the Minister's mind.

Sir, I can go on talking about a lot of good things about the Bill. But they have, already, been put forth in this House. Let me put forth some other hurdles, some other bottlenecks which need to be addressed and which may not be there in this Bill. I suppose, I may not have the suggestions, but he may have the answers. In the rural India, when the poor people want to knock the doors of justice, they have a problem. Firstly, they do not understand law and the lawyers also lead them astray, because it is in the interest of the lawyers that the case is kept pending. If it is kept pending, the lawyers benefit from it. Will the Minister come out with some measures so that these hurdles can be addressed?

Sir, I suppose, for a person like me, it would be a nightmarish situation that I get into a litigation and I would like to avoid it. An ordinary man would hate to be going and knocking the doors of justice and that fear should also be addressed. In the rural India, it is also in the interest of the rich and the influential that a case goes on and on, because the rich get advantage out of it.

He tires out the common man. It tires out the poor. It tires out the man in the rural India who is totally dependent on one case. He would like to go in for arbitration or some sort of 'samjhauta' or the other. You must also look into that. I do not know if you have the answers. But these are the only two or three points which I wanted to raise. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajanj, Bihar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a very good Bill and I rise to support it. The shortage of judges is one of the definite reasons for delay in judicial process but at the same time we have to see the practical angle also. I have said practical approach because the initiation of civil matters takes place from the Executive and the beginning of criminal matters takes place from the police. I feel that initially the case is not strong and the Court or the judiciary delivers its judgement on the basis of the facts presented before it whether they are right or wrong.

Sir, I want to tell you that the cases which go to the police are based on some one's statements and the police proceedings take place on the basis of evidence. When the investigation of a case is handed over to the police, in none of the cases I have seen that the police would send in writing that a prima-facie case has been established against the guilty. Nowhere does it register its secret investigation in the diary. After that the judicial proceedings take place which is surely a process involving long delays. The Bill to reform this process which has been brought by the hon'ble Minister is worthy of appreciation. I would like to give some suggestions in this regard, if the hon'ble Minister finds them worth, he should surely try to implement them.

You have said that there are several cases which are fit to be disposed after arbitration. I feel that it will be in the interest of the society and the public but the criteria of arbitration will have to be fixed. Unless you provide legal sanction for mediation and insist on the mediation like Panchayats which is done in villages and which has no legal status, nothing will come out of it. In my opinion the criteria for arbitration should be such that two arbitrators each should be taken up from both the sides i.e. plaintiff/defendent and another one should be chosen with their mutual consent, the unanimous decision of all these five arbitrators should be acceptable to the Court. A time limit should be fixed for that as if a matter is disposed of within twenty days or month through arbitration then it will be considered as having been resolved and the Court should put its seal on it. Until a legal format is not adopted for arbitration, it will be of no avail.

About evidence, the hon'ble Minister has said that affidavit will have to be given and perhaps the evidence will be taken through the notary magistrate. I do not want to cast aspersion on any particular community but hon'ble Minister, Sir, I would like to tell you that notary magistrates are those who have no significance in the courts. It is a fact. The Notary magistrates earn up to Rs. 500 to 1000 at Government's instance. With the kind of provision you are going to introduce will certainly fetch them an earning up to Rs. Five thousand but it will cause a lot of problems and hindrances in the judicial process. This is so because the

provision of oath is complicated one. You have the experience of high court and perhaps not of lower court, I have got a chance to be in lower court and I will tell you about my experience. No one has to go to the notary magistrate for getting the affidavit attested, the fee remains fixed at Rs. seven or ten there and the sends the affidavit after signing it. With new provision, the fee would become Rs. 15 to 20. But the statement in the court is recorded before the Judge. When the matter comes to giving evidence then the lawyers will be able to twist the case. Therefore, the evidence too will not be impartial. Therefore, regarding evidence, the Executive Magistrates should be empowered to attest the affidavit otherwise the purpose of tendering the evidence will not be fulfilled.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, regarding interim justice, the hon'ble Minister has said that whoever deposits the money he only will get the interim justice. Justice is already becoming expensive in the country. You have the experience regarding it. I too had to move to the Supreme Court to fight a case. Where I had to deposit Rs. 70,000 as fee for each hearing. If you talk about the money only the rich people will be able to get the interim justice after depositing money but what have you thought for the poor people. Hence such provision should be made that no money should be required for getting the interim justice and a time limit should be fixed for disposing of the petition in a month or two. To provide interim justice in exchange of money will not be justice in true sense but this will help in securing Justice only for the rich people and not for the poor people. Therefore you are urged to seriously think over it and bring about change in it.

I was reading the report of some Sethi Commission in the newspaper. His photograph has appeared only with the photograph of the Prime Minister and he has given many suggestions.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, it is 4 P.M. Shri Prabhunath Singh, you will continue when it is taken up next time.

16.00 hrs

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Disinvestment Policy of Government

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, we will take up discussion under Rule 193 regarding disinvestment policy of the Government. Shri Indrajit Gupta.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj) : Sir, either the hon. Finance Minister or the Minister Incharge should be present in the House while we discuss this issue. ... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : A Cabinet Minister is here. They will also be coming.

... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, now there is Minister Incharge of this. He is not present in the House.

... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : He will come soon.

16.01 hrs

[Mr. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Either the Finance Minister or the new Minister in-charge of disinvestment should be there. None of them is present here. How will the discussion begin? ... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh) : He is in the lobby. I find the particular Minister who is in-charge of disinvestment is in the lobby.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : We are not discussing the issue of animal husbandry or anything like that but we are discussing disinvestment policy.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Midnapore) : Actually, we do not know. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: In the meanwhile, some Minister can note down.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, you have to give some direction. This is not the way to treat the House, the discussion and the issue. If that is the direction, we can raise any matter, and any member of the Cabinet can note down. Is this the way of showing seriousness?

MR. SPEAKER : They will note down. In the meanwhile, the Minister will come.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Now, he has come. He was in the lobby.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : I am seeking to raise a discussion on the question of the Government's disinvestment policy and the functioning of the Disinvestment Commission. I gather that Shri Arun Jaitley has very recently been empowered by the Minister of Finance to pay special attention to this question of disinvestment. The possible reason for it may be that Government is now anxious for this disinvestment process to be extended not only to Public Sector Undertakings but to joint ventures also. Up to now, disinvestment of shares in Public Sector Undertakings was proceeding at quite a fast pace but it appears that the Government is not satisfied. They want the whole process to be further expedited. Not only expedited but also they wanted it to encompass a much broader field of activity.

As I mentioned just now, the reports are that Shri Arun Jaitley is entrusted with the job of seeing that not only the Public Sector Undertakings but also joint ventures in which the Public Sector is a partner along with the private sector should also be brought within the compass of this disinvestment.

For example, there are companies like Maruti. There is Indian Airlines. There is Steel Authority of India. There are so many other joint ventures. All these, up to now, have been kept out of the area of disinvestment. But I apprehend now that after so many years of working, the Government is eager to step up the pace of disinvestment and to see that more and more Public Sector Undertakings including joint ventures are brought within this compass of disinvestment. I would not name the paper. One newspaper which is very kindly disposed towards the private sector has also approvingly commented that Shri Jaitley is just the right person for this job.

Sir, the Disinvestment Commission was set up in 1991, that is, eight years ago, a pretty long time. I should just point out that Government announced in disinvestment is something which the Finance Minister has spelt out a number of times in both the Houses and outside the Parliament also.

As far as we have understood it, the Government's intention - though we do not agree with it at all - was that fairly large sums of money which are locked up or tied up in the capital holdings of public sector enterprises should be made available. For what?

Firstly, they should be made available in order to help them to see that the Government's own funds are further strengthened and replenished by diverting this money from the public sector units to strengthen the Government Budget.

Secondly, they said that there are some non-strategic Public Sector Undertakings which are running at losses should be strengthened. We wish to use this money for the purpose of strengthening of those units, and we will see that this money is used in order to bring out some viable plans and schemes for strengthening these weaker units and give them a better chance to function properly and efficiently.

Shri Yashwant Sinha was speaking on the 13th of December, in the other House on the same subject. He has stated:

"That the Government has decided that in the generality of the cases, the Government's shareholding in public sector enterprises will be brought down to 26 per cent, (which means the minority shareholding and the majority share holding will not be any longer held by the Government)."

[Shri Indrajit Gupta]

The second point which I made was that this is contradictory. In the cases of public sector enterprises inviting speedy consideration, the Government will continue to retain the majority of shareholding. Just before this, he has said that in the case of these Government enterprises, the share holding should be brought down to 26 per cent. He says just after that:

"In the cases of public sector enterprises inviting speedy consideration, the Government will continue to retain the majority of shareholding."

I think, this question should be clarified by the hon. Minister when he replies as to what exactly the Minister of Finance meant by this.

I am still quoting Shri Yashwant Sinha. The third point he made was that the interests of the workers will be protected in all cases. Of course, the actual practice that is going on is very contrary to this. Numerous cases are being raised in the House during Question Hour, during Zero Hour, and through Matters under Rule 377. The hon. Members are citing instances of so many of these public sector enterprises where the workers' interests far from being protected - are being very much sacrificed. They are being subjected even to non-payment of wages for several months. The Government's strategy towards public sector enterprises will continue to encompass a judicious mix of strengthening these strategic units and privatising the non-strategic units. Privatising non-strategic units through gradual disinvestment and all strategic sales and devising a viable rehabilitation strategy for weaker units are the scheme.

This is what the Finance Minister has said. He has mentioned later on:

"Strategic sale means sale of some strategic units to strategic parties who are willing to buy them. The difference between disinvestment and strategic sale is that when we undertake a strategic sale, we hand over the management to the strategic partners."

So, this is a plan which includes general selling of shares to the public. It also includes selling out of joint ventures. It also includes strategic sale, meaning that not only sale of the equity but even transfer of the management may be made to the strategic partners who are willing to persist this sale. So, it is a very broad compass and under these different heads, we would like to know from the Government how many different undertakings they have tried to dispose of under these various heads.

We are, of course, completely opposed to this policy because this is another name for dismantling and demolishing the whole structure of the public sector which has been built up over so many years, costing thousands of crores of the people's money. The public sector in the industrial field has played a very vital and strategic part in

strengthening our whole industrial infrastructure and in providing this country's economic sinews that much of the strength which it was lacking until the public sector came into play. Disinvestment may be a polite word, but actually what it amounts to is demolishing the private sector and taking out one by one important public sector units and transferring them to the private sector. But the Government does not say like that. They are not frank enough to admit what the whole game is behind this policy. We are totally opposed to this and I wish to emphasise the fact that earlier on when this Disinvestment policy first started, it was stated that only part of the money which would be received from the sale of the shares, would go into what was called the Disinvestment Fund. That was one of the main recommendations which had been made. It was said that ten per cent of the proceeds realised from the sale of shares would be put into this Disinvestment Fund. The first Report of the Disinvestment Commission which was submitted in February, 1977, in fact, said that this Disinvestment Fund could be utilised by the Government to replace the budgetary support which is supposed to come from the budget to various units. Often it is not given on the plea that there are no budgetary resources with which to help these individual units. The Disinvestment Commission had proposed that the Disinvestment Fund created within the sale proceeds of the companies' shares and transferred to the private sector, should be used for the purpose of giving budgetary support to units which were urgently in need of that.

As far as I am aware, there are no examples of the budgetary support being given to public sector units out of this Disinvestment Fund because as far as I know, this Disinvestment Fund has existed only on paper; this has not come into actual operation.

Then, the tenure of this Disinvestment Fund itself has ended on the 30th November this year.

It was working upto 30th November, 1999. But, after that the Government had disinvested the Disinvestment Commission. The Disinvestment Commission no longer exists. It has been allowed to lapse as it were. Before it lapsed, it had submitted some 12 Reports to the Government. We do not know the fate of those Reports. In many of them, the Disinvestment Commission had suggested that instead of large scale selling of shares, what should be done was to work out some viable schemes for strengthening the weaker units for giving them the possibility of restructuring, for improving their technology, improving their management and thereby reducing the budgetary deficits from which they suffer.

Also, the hon. Minister of Finance himself had claimed that a part of these proceeds from the sale of public sector shares would be used by the Government for what he has called the social sector. In fact, in one case he had stated that this money would be used for construction of houses.

construction of roads, supply of water to rural areas and so on and for this kind of social purposes would also be one of the objectives of this budgetary exercise. However, I believe that due to inter-Ministerial difficulties and inter-Ministerial rivalries, there being a number of Ministers which are supposed to look after this disinvestment sector, there are difficulties. Technically, of course, the Finance Ministry is the boss, as it were. But other Ministries are also involved – either those which are directly concerned with the particular industry with which that enterprise is concerned or which are concerned with export and import. They were being looked after by different Ministries. This has led to a number of differences among them which have prevented effective action being taken.

As far as I am aware, disinvestment has actually been carried out in 39 public sector enterprises and from 1991-92 to 1999-2000, the amount which has been received by the Government through disinvestment of Central Public Sector Undertakings is Rs. 18,288 crore, nearly Rupees two hundred thousand crore. This is what they have received. How has this money been used? Except by saying that it has been credited to the Consolidated Fund of India, there is no further information available as to the breakup of this expenditure. Everything goes to the Consolidated Fund of India. That we know. But what about the breakup of this money? How much of it was spent on reviving the sick or weak units by improving their management, giving them better technology and other methods? How much of it was used for paying off for workers who were supposed to take the so-called voluntary retirement and leave their service and go? That is also included in this. How much was spent on what are called the social benefits or bringing about social improvements in the social sector?

These things have not been either spelt out or told to the country or the House. I would like to know from the hon. Minister about these details.

Then Sir, there is a seeming contradiction. The Finance Minister's statement in the other House that the Government's shareholding would be reduced to 26 per cent does not make any sense. That means the Government wants, in all these holdings, in all these public sector enterprises, to become a minority shareholder. What is the meaning of it? I am not able to follow. If it is so, it is a very serious matter. It means that the Government is actually liquidating its holdings in the public sector and demitting the whole thing to the private sector because he has said elsewhere, as I have quoted a little bit earlier, that the Centre would also be holding a majority of shares in what are called the strategic units. There is a difference between what they say are losing units, the units which have been making financial losses for a long period—these can be sold, but

there will be nobody to buy them—and those units which have been running in profits. These units may command a good share price in the market, but why should they be sold since they are showing a good performance and getting high profit?

The rehabilitation of weaker units, non-strategic units, is one of the declared aims. I suggest that it has not been done at all. If anything has been done, we would like to know some instances, some examples from the Minister. What are the units where they have gone in for this kind of a viable rehabilitation of the weaker units? I would like to know whether sale of units in sectors like oil, petroleum, power and so on, which are strategic certainly by any means, include the question of handing over the management of these units to the strategic partners assuming that the people who are willing to buy shares in these sectors are also not domestic purchasers, but international purchasers, which means foreign companies. They have not procured it. They are also included as bidders for the purchase of shares and if they buy a sizeable quantity of shares, the Government's policy is to allow them to also become partners in the management. That is a very far-reaching step, the Government is intending to take.

There was a discussion the other day, Sir, and I think, the Power Minister was involved about a reported move of the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) to take over all the shares of the NHPC. Both are public sector enterprises and both of them are operating in this very strategic sector of power. We know that the power requirements in this country are also growing all the time and they are not able to meet the requirements at present by their installed capacity. So, the Government is very much interested in seeing that the capacity to generate more power is increased substantially, but the method for doing this, which appears to be under consideration, is for one of them to buy up all shares of the other. This is a curious method. Of course, it was denied here by the Power Minister who said that no such decision had been taken yet. He did not deny whether it was under consideration or not.

He said that the matter was still being considered, but no final decision had been taken. This is one of the options, and his option is this one. Just recently, although the Finance Minister, on the floor of the House, very strenuously denied that it amounted to privatisation, we have had the example of the two insurance corporations, the LIC and the GIC, into which entry of the private sector has now been permitted by a Bill which has been introduced recently in Parliament. Though the Bill has not been passed yet, the idea is that in these two very old, very traditional, very well established and very well performing public sector corporations in the field of insurance, which cannot possibly be accused of either being inefficient or running in losses, they are going to allow the private sector to come in. Even though it is argued that

[Shri Indrajit Gupta]

since their total holding capacity of shares will be limited and they will not be able to hold more than the ceiling, but anyway, this is a very very important step that they are taking which is, in our opinion, a signal to the foreign investors abroad, and it was meant to be that they should be encouraged to come and invest in our country because these were two sectors where the foreign insurance companies were very very anxious and eager to be able to enter for the sake of making higher profits. This was being strenuously objected and opposed by different sections of public opinion in this country, not only by trade unions. There is a wrong impression sought to be created that on this insurance question, this was a dispute between the workers' unions and the company management. That is not so. The point is that in the case of the insurance companies, allowing foreign capital to come into these two sectors would change the whole balance of capital holding in this country, and would lead to a very massive fall, I should say, in public sector performance and investments.

Then, Sir, another example I would like to just briefly mention is the Gas Authority of India. The Gas Authority of India is one of the so-called *Navratnas*. It is competent according to the Government's own reports which I was looking at. They say that it is professionally managed, very efficiently managed; it is a competent company and it has made a net profit this year of Rs. 1,060 crore. The Disinvestment Commission to whom this Gas Authority of India was referred—I do not know as to why it was referred—recommended that Rs. 21,000 crore worth of shares of the Gas Authority of India may be placed in the domestic and the international markets for purchasers who might be interested in buying, mainly they would be international purchasers. So, after that, this has happened very recently, we would like to know as to what is the strategic move that the Government has undertaken by putting both these very flourishing and efficient public sector companies on to the bargaining table of the Disinvestment Commission.

Twenty-five per cent of the shares, I am told of the Gas Authority of India are already being sought to be purchased by two companies which are themselves the competitors of the Gas Authority of India.

1629 hrs.

[SHRI P.H. PANDIYAN *in the Chair*]

One is ENRON in the State of Maharashtra, the other is the British Gas Company. Both these international companies which are very very strong and powerful multinationals have expressed their desire to get into this field and to buy up to 25 per cent shares of the Gas Authority of India. What is the reason for it, why it should be permitted, we do not understand because the Government itself admits that the Gas Authority of India is a highly efficient and professional company which has been doing extremely well and is meeting the requirements of the community.

So, everything, as I see at present, the original objectives—the original strategy behind this Disinvestment policy, as stated eight years or seven years ago by the then Finance Minister—do not hold good any more. The aims for which this was introduced are now being replaced by the kind of a panicky move by the Government to sell out as quickly as they can so that the public sector companies in these important fields are replaced as soon as possible by private sector companies who are willing to come in and make profits. In fact, the market is being sold out. The market is being sold out and this is a part of the policy of the present Government; this is a part of the re-structuring New Economic Policy which is being followed for the last few years and which we have opposed strenuously and we shall continue to oppose. It is because actually it will mean that ultimately everything would be sold out.

Sir, just now when I was coming to the House I met a friend who told me—I do not know the source of his information, he told me that he would meet me later on and tell me—that there is a move afoot on the part of the Government.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : Banks also.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA : Privatisation of banks, anyhow are on the anvil. Already there are so many private banks and foreign banks functioning in this country. We know, lately there has been a Committee's Report advising that more public sector banks should be privatised. But what my friend was telling me was that there is a move now and there is canvassing going on for allowing foreign private sector to come into the retail trade in this country. Retail trade in this country will also be allowed to be penetrated by foreign capital. I do not know whether this is correct or not.

Sir, I suppose, we have one of the most flourishing private retail businesses in India which are manned, owned and controlled by our own people. There is nothing wrong with them. But if this is a move which is just as a parallel move going on to introduce foreign capital into the printed media in this country—which is also being strenuously opposed by all media people and non-media people and if the newspapers, the Press, the retail business, the insurance business everything is to be handed over to the foreign capital—then, I do not know, where will we be left at the end of another couple of years?

Sir, therefore, in the polite name of disinvestment what is taking place is actually selling out of the entire business of this country to the private sector, to the foreign parties who are certainly not coming here out of any intention of charity or love towards us but purely in order to make money and augment their profits. It is a matter of shame that this Government which earlier on, many of stalwarts of this Party, were talking about *Swadeshi*, I do not know, if they still adhere to that objective of *Swadeshi* or not. They are, in any case, a party now to all these moves.

Sir, my friend, Shri Ram Naik is sitting here and he, of course, will also throw some light on this question as to why they are so eager to sell out everything in this country to the foreign parties and foreign business interests.

Sir, therefore, I am totally opposed to this whole Disinvestment policy. It is a cloak to hide what is actually the real motive of the Government and what is going on. Therefore, I would urge upon the House to be vigilant, to keep a vigilant eye on the movements of this Government and to resist, with all possible means, these moves to privatise everything in this country and hand the resources of this country over to foreign parties who are eager to get in.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this discussion within the scope of Rule 193 initiated by the father of House Shri Indrajit Gupta relates to a matter of great significance and deserves the attention of the House. The whole nation is curiously watching as to what would be the policy of this Government in regard to disinvestment.

Sir, when I saw on the television that the Government led by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee issued a communique from Rashtrapati Bhavan for setting up a separate Department called the Department of Disinvestment headed by our dear Minister Shri Arun Jaitley, I thought that the Prime Minister had either lost confidence in the Finance Minister or the Finance Minister is not found competent by him to deal with this important financial task under his umbrella. Anyway, it is a concern of the Cabinet, and the Prime Minister has the full authority to decide on such matters. However, I felt the first thing that was disinvested was the power of the Finance Minister which had already been disinvested to a safe dispensation headed by Shri Arun Jaitley.

The policy of disinvestment has not yet been spelt out by the Government but the Department has been created. It is a fact that at the time of announcement of the policy of economic liberalisation by the Government headed by Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, it was felt that budgetary support to the loss-making PSUs should be reduced gradually. So, the budgetary support as a percentage of the total plan outlay of the public sector has declined considerably from 32 per cent in 1990 to 13 per cent in 1995.

There is no dispute over the view that the public sector required greater scrutiny. But when the Disinvestment Commission, constituted during the United Front Government which was supported by us from outside, made it abundantly clear that the ultimate outcome of the disinvestment should be (a) to further strengthen the management of the public sector and (b) to modernise them and to ensure further upgradation of technology, and to see that the surplus available is spent on social sector, human resource sector, etc.

I apprehend, the Minister may correct me if I am wrong, that the party in power had made a very high-tuned campaign before election saying that the economic scenario of the country was absolutely stable and rosy and that everything was in order. The Finance Minister, Shri Yashwant Sinha, during his interview 'Hard Talk' on BBC further stressed on it. I presume the Government is now realising that they made a mess of the entire fiscal front. It was to compensate the Rs. 10,000 crore budgetary deficit that it was hurriedly thought to off-load even the shares of the *Navratnas* at any price. It was exposed in the case of GAIL.

Shri Ram Naik was saying yesterday on television that he was also considering a 10 per cent further off-load of the shares of Indian Oil Corporation. It is unfortunate that they talk such things on television and not in Parliament.

THE MINISTER OF PERTOLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK) : Since the issue is raised, I will reply to it.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I am just reminding him of what he said on the television.

Sir, with all its right or wrong recommendations, the Ramakrishna Commission, for which I do not hold any brief, submitted seven reports. One of the reports says:

"The Disinvestment Commission has urged the Government to recommend an audit of investment transactions in public sector undertakings by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India within six months of the completion of the transaction."

The Commission had said in its Fifth Report that:

"In order that the disinvestment is ultimately in the best interest of the public while, at the same time, establishing a proper environment for decision-making, it is essential that audit of each disinvestment by C&AG is conducted thoroughly, expeditiously with the involvement of professionals familiar with the working of the industry and the capital markets."

The Commission had said that the reasons are very clear.

The Commission further said that:

"The people involved in the transaction would be available for examination at a time when their memory will be fresh with regard to the action taken and decision arrived at as soon as the disinvestment..."

Now, in case of GAIL which has been much talked about in this country, what was the urgency to sell it when the market price was low? Sir, I can show through the Report of the Disinvestment Commission that they have purposely advised the ONGC not go come under this list at the moment because they are expecting some better price later on, when

[Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi]

the administered price of the fuel would be finally settled down. Now, since they are advising in one way, the Government is responding to their advice. Whom did the GAIL dispose to their shares? They disposed of their shares to British companies and to Enron, who are the competitor of GAIL, and thereby, they will not only have their market command but also the ultimate command in terms of production-controlling management.

Would the Minister consider recommending for such disinvestment including the GAIL's to refer to the Comptroller and Auditor General for quick audit, and explain the transparency in that matter? This is one of the recommendations.

Sir, now conveniently they are choosing something. The Government had got the mandate in the name of NDA. They have come out. The Government has a Disinvestment Commission now to run and plan the direction. The Commission, rightly or wrongly, has got certain kind of autonomy, if not the statutory provisions laid down, which the Parliament can do later on, that too if the Government comes forward. But there is a Department without explaining or placing them before the Table of the House. What is the new approach of this Government in regard to the Disinvestment policy of the country? They have come out in a piecemeal manner. They are disposing of the GAIL in one manner, planning about the NTPC in another manner, and thinking about the ONGC and IOC in some other manner. In the meantime, they have also created a Department of Disinvestment just to work out an immediate need of meeting the budgetary deficit. One of the objectives or conditions of the Disinvestment Commission, if I have heard correctly about the proceedings of the then UF Government is that 'It would not aim to meet the budgetary deficit. It has some other works to do.' I have repeated about it earlier also, and I do not want to repeat the same now. That is why, we want to know about the policy. Will they come out with the policy first? What is their policy in regard to disinvestment?

Sir, the hon. Minister has given a very beautiful nomenclature *Navratnas*—these are the nine jewels of our country which prove to be worthy of the nation. Who are they? They are the public sector companies. Who are the management? They are our people. The nine jewels prove to be worthy of the nation, and the Government is only considering them whenever they find, in the disinvestment ratio, without considering the market price, to disinvest their share capital at the earliest.

Instead of approaching the international market, the Bharat Petroleum, the Indian Oil Corporation, and the Hindustan Petroleum, will go to the Middle-East or will go to France to buy equity of Gulf oil companies in the Middle-East to operate here, to augment more money for us. The Government is thinking otherwise. 'How quickly, they can off-load some of the shares?' Actually they are not 'some of the shares', they are 30 per cent, 40 per cent, 41 per cent or

even 42 per cent. They are selling them to those who can ultimately take the command of the oil sector.

Now, Sir, through you, I would like to address a very political question to the hon. Minister. He should not take it as technical. We know about the US design in the Middle-East. Why are they creating trouble for Iraq day in and day out? The ultimate design of the US is to get hold of the oil industry in the Middle-East, maybe, after five years, 10 years or 15 years. India's nine jewels are proving their mastery on their feet, be it the Indian Oil, be it Hindustan Petroleum, be it the GAIL, be it the Bharat Petroleum, be it the IBP, and finally be it the ONGC. They are planning how to off-load their shares and give them to the British companies or to Enron. Do they want all the Middle-East business to be taken over by the US arrangements? Therefore, this matter is not merely of some technical words.

The disinvestment will strengthen this Unit. Disinvestment will fetch some new resources to the Consolidated Fund of India and thereafter all these things will be planned. These are all nothing. The whole approach of yours is, as I understand from your Government, in the absence of your policy, you are very hurriedly planning to please and satisfy some of your masters, if I may use the word, who are planning to visit India very soon, as quickly as possible so that the overall arrangement in the name of economic revolution policy is settled and settled for ever. I strongly feel, therefore, that before you decide anything, you must take the House into confidence placing before it your disinvestment policy. About which areas are you thinking? There are three types of units in public sector, units which you call nine jewels, and units which are healthier. The study has revealed that with some upgradation and modernisation of technology, they can stand on their own feet and there are units which can go for joint sector. You are not using that. You are saying that strategic partner takes them. The ultimate end of it is total privatisation and giving it to the banks. Therefore, I feel that Government is not serious in this matter. Therefore, instead of placing a policy paper on this matter, they have created a Department to meet their immediate requirements in the Budget.

In the Bharat Petroleum Corporation, now the Government holding is 66.20 and offloaded 33.80. In the Gas Authority of India, the Government holding is 67.34, and off loaded 32.66. In Hindustan Organics, the Government holding is only 58.61 and offloaded 41.39. In Hindustan Petroleum, Government holding is 51.06 and offloaded 48.94. In Mahanagar Telephone Nigam, the Government holding is 56.20 and offloaded 43.80. In Videsh Sanchar Nigam, 52.96 is the corporate holding and offloaded 47.04.

I have quoted a few of these from the *Navratnas*. What message are you trying to give through this process of disinvestment? Have you been able to achieve even one

thing for the last 1½ years? Here is the middle order public sector unit. Have you tacked with joint venture programme, a joint sector, to run the show? No. Not a single one. Have you been able to tie up the technology, if I may say so, or the six public sectors to modernise? No. You are coming out with this policy to destroy all those dreams of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in those areas of public sector where commanding height of economy has been proposed. Yes, there are arguments. I know Rs. 200,000 crore have been spent. What is the result? There are losses and losses incurred by a lot of people. I do agree that in a developing nation like India, with social obligation and social compulsions, without considering the professional aptitude of the management, we did employ people. Did we commit a crime by giving employment to the people? You should not take the statement that the public sector units are not running in good health in a casual manner. We have to probe. I still consider that if professional aptitude of the management is further monitored and if we get good market access in appropriate time, SAIL in this country could come out from losses. It could not do it. There are arrears, for instance, Dr. Bolla Bulli Ramaiah is here. He handled the Commerce Ministry. If you do not develop STC and MMTC as professional marketing organisations in Government itself, how can they grow? In a few of them, of course, in some cases we took action where the management was wrong. You are taking it as a business, giving it to somebody else and ask them to shut down the door and go back. Is it not a fact? I also handled that Department for a long time. Therefore, the Government is not serious.

There has been a definite under-pricing of the shares of GAIL. When we sold the GAIL shares, the share price was at an all time low. The urgency was that the British Gas Company and Enron at that time dictated, 'You will have to sell the shares today; otherwise, we will not buy them tomorrow' and you had succumbed to that without considering the recommendations of the Commission.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There are five more hon. Members to speak.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI : I will take very little time.

The period over which the disinvestment is made is very important. There is no option of strategic sales as proposed by the Commission but the strategic sales shall ultimately lead to the total privatization of those units. What are the checks and balances that the Government is considering in this matter? I know, the Government will come out with its reply that it was the Congress Party which initiated liberalization. Yes, it was the Congress and UF Governments that thought of disinvestment. There, it was clearly laid down

that the proceeds of disinvestment shall be utilised to modernise the unit itself, and also to spend for the health and social sectors.

We are, of course, consistent in our approach. But when we proposed all these things as our philosophy, Shri Ram Naik and those in Government now, raised the flag of *Swadeshi*. So, I now watch with great interest that if before the dawn of the new millennium anyone is to be rewarded for greater inconsistency in their political prophecies, it is four Government and your Party. Your inconsistency has converted the idea of *Swadeshi* into *sattaseen*. To keep the power with you, you accept whatever suits you, forgetting your ideology.

[Translation]

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA (Mumbai Northeast) : Sir, first of all, I would like to thank and felicitate the hon'ble Prime Minister for giving due consideration to disinvestment and thereby creating a separate department for it after the period of 9 years i.e. from 1991 to 99. The department is headed by my friend Shri Arun Jaitley who is a very efficient person. I hope that he will bring a new ray of hope in this department.

Sir, I will put forth my view point cutting across party line. Disinvestment means that we are going to sell the assets of our country. I request the members of opposition as well as those belonging to the ruling party not to take my views on a personal level. Being a Chartered Accountant myself, I have tried to understand this issue in depth.

[English]

I am getting more and more confused when I get more and more details.

[Translation]

The three main parties sitting in the House have formed Governments during the last 9 years. These three formations have sold out public undertakings which are considered as 'Nav-Ratanas'. We keep on blaming each other. I request that we should not blame each other because if I blame Congress party or the opposition, I would be blamed in return. I was taking notes when hon'ble Shri Indrajit Gupta initiated the debate but I am not going to say much about it. My friend Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munsi stated that why did Shri Manmohan Singh and Shri Rao not follow the policy of socialism initiated by Shri Nehru and instead took a 'U' turn. I will not go into that rather I would request the House cutting across party line that we should consider this matter seriously. It should not happen.....

[English]

Hindustan is available for sale, come and exploit us. Whether you are an internal industrialist or an outside multinational.

[Shri Kirit Somaiya]

[*Translation*]

I have no intention to point finger at any body. Respected Indrajit Gupta has blamed the BJP Government though he himself has remained Minister for 2-3 years. What happened during his tenure? My respected friend Shri Priya Ranjan Das Muni was reading out the recommendation of the Disinvestment Commission of his period. Your Government was supporting them. However, I do not want to go in to that.

[*English*]

During 1991-95, they have collected Rs. 9794 crore. Where has that money gone? They had created a consolidated fund, a separate disinvestment fund. Where has that money gone? It has gone to fill up the deficit.

[*Translation*]

Yet I would request you to leave it. What I am going to say is a surprise for my Government also. My submission is that we should discuss this matter cutting across party line. A reference was made about audit. I also want that audit should be there and I hope that hon'ble Shri Arun will make a beginning in this direction.

[*English*]

Let there be a separate audit.

[*Translation*]

We had raised some points and disinvestment commission had carried out research in that regard. The concept is that particular companies like GAIL, MTNL, VSNL and IPCL will be affected by disinvestment but how did it happen? The shortcomings in this regard will be checked at the stage of audit.

[*English*]

At the same time, that can help create accountability also.

[*Translation*]

The concept of audit is very good. Besides, audit, a white paper and a policy paper should also be brought in this regard.

[*English*]

Certainly it is a very important matter.

[*Translation*]

A Committee should also be appointed in this regard. Not only the opinion of Members of the House but also the advice of the outside experts should also be sought in this matter. I came to know about it when an expert told me. A

reply was given in the House on 5th March, 1999. How will the hon'ble Minister come to know about what is going on in administration if we do not point out the short-comings. On 5th March, 1999, a question was asked from the hon'ble Minister about the target of disinvestment fixed for the year 1998-99.

[*English*]

The reply was Rs. 5000 crores.

[*Translation*]

When only 26 days were left he stated.

[*English*]

He had collected only Rs. 1200 crores.

[*Translation*]

It was stated in the answer that the remaining three thousand eight hundred crore would be collected shortly.

On 7th December, 1999 another reply has been given in which he has stated that

[*English*]

In 1998-99, we could complete our target of Rs. 5000; not only Rs. 5000 crore, but also we had collected Rs. 5371 crore.

[*Translation*]

I appreciated the Finance Minister when I read the answer. However, when I mentioned about it in Mumbai. I came to know that.

[*English*]

It is a shocking surprise.

[*Translation*]

I request to hon'ble Minister to clarify it at sometime if not now as to whom we are implicating. Members of all the three parties are required to consider it.

[*English*]

I do not know, I am not sure, let the Minister and the Government confirm it.

[*Translation*]

The disinvestment that took place in the remaining 26 days.

[*English*]

It was completely a window-dressing.

[Translation]

A Government undertaking sold its shares to another Government company, the other company sold it to the third company and hence the third company got the shares of first company. GAIL sold its shares worth Rs. 1500 crores. It may not have created an uproar if hon'ble Shri Ram Naik had mentioned it on that day. GAIL sold its shares under domestic sale to ONGC for Rs. 60/- per share. Then IOC sold 10% of its shares to ONGC for Rs. 1200 crores. IOC and GAIL purchased shares worth Rs. 2600/- crores from ONGC.

17.00 hrs.

This happened not only during the tenure of N.D.A Government but I can give details that it happened during the tenure of your Government also. However, I do not want to go into that. Adequate attention is required in this regard. I can give you details of the situation prevailing before the constitution of disinvestment commission.

[English]

"The conventional view stated about two decades ago is in the context of British Privatisation Programme, that blue chip PSUs should not be sold to meet Budgetary deficits as this would amount to selling the Family Silver to pay the butter."

[Translation]

What is the situation after disinvestment? The previous three Governments used this measure to cover up the deficit financing. I am aware of the reply given by the administration. Had this amount not been deposited in consolidated fund after collection, the debt would have risen and Rs. 60-65000 crores would have to be invested in Public Sector or elsewhere.

[English]

What are you selling? You are selling the blue chip companies. You are selling the VSNL and the MTNL. You are disposing of the GAIL and the IPCL.

[Translation]

Only sick units will be left with the Government. Such a situation will arise after ten years that there will be nothing left to be sold and salaries will still have to be paid in the sick industries. What will be the situation then? 49% equity of the VSNL has been sold and now it is in control of 51% equity. Such is the situation in the rest of the companies as well.

[English]

What type of argument is this ?

[Translation]

The Government may resort to disinvestment but it should not be used in deficit financing.

[English]

The Government will have to borrow more. Sometimes, we have to demarcate.

[Translation]

We shall have to draw a line somewhere. Take the example of British privatisation.

[English]

Unlike the Margaret Thatcher's style of privatisation guided by the conviction that Government-controlled PSUs are less efficient, the policy followed in India was driven by the Central Government's need to mobilise the resources for bridging the Budgetary gap.

[Translation]

Can't we emulate the privatisation model of England?

[English]

Your are disposing of the whole unit.

[Translation]

I am unable to comprehend it. This Department has given different reports in respect of different cases.

[English]

We will have a strategic partner.

We will keep 26 or 30 per cent. We will transfer the management.

[Translation]

I am unable to understand it. The case of IPCL is under consideration. The Government has a holding of 59% therein.

[English]

You want to sell 26% of the shares. You want to dispose of 33 or 34% of the shares.

[Translation]

33-34% shares will be sold, company will be transferred and the private companies will take over.

[English]

Whether it is an Indian company or multi-national company.

[Shri Kirit Somaiya]

[Translation]

What will they do?

[English]

You will have a minor partner.

[Translation]

They will care for the profits and exploit others. What will be the value of 26% holdings in such a situation ?

[English]

You will get dividend.

[Translation]

If the dividend has not been declared.

[English]

Let us have some discussion.

[Translation]

There is a need to have an in depth discussion on this. Everybody should contribute to it. Instead of selling 15-20% or 30% shares of the company, entire company should be sold.

[English]

You decide which company it should be. Let the House decide it.

[Translation]

Selling the entire company would prevent exploitation. If bluechip companies are sold, we will be left with hotel business. Will the Government run hotels? There is a need to consider this issue.

What is the position of public sector today?

[English]

The accumulated loss of PSUs has reached a staggering amount of Rs. 42,500 crore at the end of 31st March, 1998.

[Translation]

Will the shares of the blue chip companies be sold for this purpose? The Government should consider this issue. The profits generated from disinvestment, should be pooled into a separate fund. There is a need to ponder over the issue of utilisation of fund.

[English]

For reconstruction of some of the industries or starting new industries.

[Translation]

Infact these funds should be utilised for reducing the foreign or the external debt. Thus the interest burden will be reduced. Hon'ble Minister is in charge of an important Department. I have certain questions regarding disinvestment of IPCL which I would like to put in the House. Will the Hon'ble Minister reply to them ? How many bids were invited for IPCL. How many were finalised? Four bidders made their bids. One of them withdrew his bid and the second bid was rejected by the core group headed by the company secretary.

[English]

Now, only two persons remain.

[Translation]

You maintain that only 3 out of 4 are left in the field and two of them have formed a cartel, a syndicate. What will you get in that case?

[English]

Even that can be manipulated. Has it not happened so ? I would like to request the hon. Minister.

[Translation]

That he should hold an enquiry regarding the trend in the case of IPCL in the last one and a half years. Government or the financial institutions have themselves contributed money.

[English]

It is being used against us only.

[Translation]

The rate of the IPCL shares was 58 to 60 rupees at Diwali last month. The rates hovered between 60 to 100 rupees upto March. Today, the price of the same share has jumped to 130 to 135 rupees. You would be surprised to know that U.T.I. has sold shares worth more than one crore rupees.

[English]

I may be wrong.

[Translation]

Were the shares sold at a price less than Rs. 100 or at a price of 60 to 70 rupees?

[English]

Who were the market brokers? Who had cornered these shares? It was three off-shore funds. They are holding 12.5% of the IPCL shares. Do you know why?

[Translation]

These are benami because such is the condition of disinvestment in IPCL that the bidder, who acquired it

[English]

he will have to have an open public offer.

[Translation]

that he will have to acquire 20% from the share market. They have acquired 12.4% through off-shore funds which means that they are transferring their responsibility to others because no shares are available in the market. Only these shares are available. Secondly, those 10-12% shares will either be pocketed or will be sold in black market later on.

[English]

Is it true?

[Translation]

U.T.I. has sold IPCL shares worth one crore rupees last year. At what rate were these shares sold? They have confirmed that not a single share was sold from 1.4.1999 till dates. The IPCL shares worth one crore sixty four lakh rupees were sold before March 31.

[English]

At what rate? For whom? Who took the decision?

[Translation]

I would also like to mention with regard to Unit-64 that the Deepak Parekh Committee report should be presented in House.

[English]

Once again I request you

[Translation]

as to how U.T.I. 64 funds are utilised because sometimes these are used by the coalition Government and sometimes by private industrialist.

Hence, my submission is that no such sale should be made which would give rise to monopoly.

[English]

The Disinvestment Commission has rejected an application from an industry which is going to create a monopoly.

[Translation]

Core Committee withdrew the rejection. Why? I would like to tell you as to how market rigging took place in case of IPCL. The price of share went up by 122 points in Mumbai stock Exchange 10 days ago because this news was carried in 'The Economic Times' that

[English]

the Government has fixed up the floor price of IPCL at the rate of Rs. 180 to Rs. 200.

[Translation]

The Government will sell shares at the rate of 180-200 rupees.

[English]

Due to this rigging and manipulation in the market.

[Translation]

The IPCL share priced at 131 rupees went upto 144 rupees but closed at 128 rupees due to rigging.

Whereas its net asset value was 126 rupees and this did not develop during six months. As per the financial results for the last year.

[English]

The net asset value was more than Rs. 126. Now, you please enquire which Government institution sold it.

[Translation]

Hence, this is any submission and I would like to draw the attention of Shri Suresh Prabhu.

I would like to give another example. The market price of GAIL share was 145 when Mumbai Stock exchange index stood at 4000. Today when the index of Mumbai Stock Exchange is at 5000, the market value of GAIL share is 72 rupees only. This phenomenon is not related to a particular Government. Whoever has an interest in a particular company tends to manipulate the market whichever Government may be in power.

[English]

They are using our own financial institutions against us.

[Shri Kirit Somalya]

[Translation]

Hence, I would like to make some suggestions to Hon'ble Minister that whenever the option of disinvestment is to be exercised, different view will have to be taken in each case. A strategic sale should be made. Decision making takes four to five years due to which we miss out on good bidders. Hence a quick decision should be taken. If the shares are to be sold, they should be sold, otherwise the proposal should be shelved. The issue of CMC has come out in the market and

[English]

The State Bank of India has become a lead manager.

[Translation]

This is a Government Computer Company. CMC is such an old company but the market value of its share is Rs. 542 only whereas Kale Consultant company worth Rs. 2 crore has entered the market a few months ago and the market price of its share stands at Rs. 626. Against this, the value of the shares of Infosys, Satyam and P.S.I. Data stand at Rs. 10,000, Rs. 1834 and Rs. 1264 respectively. Hence I would submit that if attention is paid towards time, price, strategy and finance, I am sure that our programme regarding PSUs and disinvestment will turn out to be successful. It may be termed as a white paper or policy paper but we should try to achieve a balance. On one hand, 'Navratnas' should be sold but on the other hand, bold decisions should also be taken and we should try to dispose of the sick units as well. I am sure that Arun ji will take all those points in right spirit and bring a change for the better in disinvestment.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, when the first public sector undertaking of our country was inaugurated by the first Prime Minister of India, he said that he is not inaugurating an industry but he is inaugurating a temple of modern India. These temples of modern India are now being demolished and destroyed by this Government. Sir, the basic theme of both the Industrial Policy Statement of 1948 and the Industrial Policy Statement of 1956 was the policy of self-reliance. This policy of self-reliance was given a go by in 1991 when the policy of liberalisation was adopted. We objected to that and opposed to it at that time also. But in 1991, when the new Industrial Policy was announced and adopted by the then Government what did the Government say in regard to disinvestment of the shares of public undertakings?

In order to raise resources and encourage wider public participation, a part of the Government shareholding in public sector would be offered to mutual fund, financial institutions, general public and workers. GAIL is a glaring example. The Government did not allow to sell the shares of the Gas

Authority of India at Rs. 127 per share. But after two years, what is the change in the situation? The Government reduced the price, sold the shares of the Gas Authority of India at Rs. 80 per share! As a result of this, what is the loss to the exchequer? The loss is to the extent of Rs. 600 crore. By selling the shares of the Gas Authority of India how does the Government ensure a wider public participation?

In 1996, the Disinvestment Commission was set up. In the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front Government it was included that as there was no transparency, to have a transparent policy, there should be a Disinvestment Commission. The Disinvestment Commission has made certain important recommendations. When the Government of India found that the recommendations were not to their convenience, their reply is awaited.

The first recommendation was to set up a Disinvestment Fund. What was the object of this disinvestment? The object of disinvestment was not to bridge the fiscal deficit. The object of disinvestment was to create a Fund. That was in the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front Government. What they had stated was that the revenue generated from such disinvestment would be utilised in two vital areas of the country, namely, health and education particularly in the poor and backward areas of our country. A part of such revenue would be earmarked to create an Investment Fund which would be utilised to strengthen other public sector enterprises. The Government owes an explanation as to how much they have spent for health and education in the poor and backward areas and how much they have earmarked, out of Rs. 18,282 crore which was the fund raised upto 30.11.1999, for the revival and revamping of sick public undertakings.

Yesterday only I raised the problems of fertilizer units of our country. From Gorakhpur to Ramagundam, all the units have been closed. The Gorakhpur unit has been closed. The FACT in Cochin has been closed. In Uttar Pradesh, the Gorakhpur unit is there. In Bihar and Barauni, there is no production in the units. In the Durgapur unit in West Bengal, there is no production. There are three units in Namrup in Assam. One is functioning. Two have been closed. The Talcher unit, which is a coal-based Fertilizer Plant in Orissa, has been closed. In Andhra Pradesh, the Ramagundam unit has been closed. My TDP friends will admit that it is also a coal-based Fertilizer Plant and it has also been closed. ... (Interruptions)

Now, I would like to know from the hon. Minister that out of Rs. 18,282 crore, how much money they are planning to spend in order to revive these seven or eight Urea Units of our country which are vitally needed for agricultural production. What we are hearing from the Government is that our public sector undertakings are incurring losses. They never said how much the Government of India had received from the public sector undertakings towards excise duty,

sales tax and dividend. They never say about the employment generated by these public sector undertakings. They never say about the social obligations which these public sector undertakings do undertake. Out of the 242 public sector undertakings, only 236 are operational now. There are 74 Ministers ... (Interruptions) How many private sector undertakings like the Enron and the British Gas Company undertake the social obligations like our public sector undertakings? Shri Ram Naik is eager to sell the GAIL to Enron because the Enron is in Maharashtra. They are selling the shares of the Gas Authority of India at throw away prices, whatever price they may get. The assets created by millions and millions of people of our country are being squandered away by the Government. I would like to put this question whether we should allow it or not; whether we should allow this Government to sell out, to squander the assets created by the toil of the millions and millions of workers of our country.

Can the Government say that during the super-cyclone period, how many of the Private Companies like the Enron and the British Gas Company came forward to adopt one village or one district like it was done by the Bharat Heavy Electrical Limited? Can we forget all these things? Of course, there are some chronically sick public sector undertakings. There are some public sector undertakings which are not public sector undertakings since their inception. There are some Units which were closed down or abandoned by the erstwhile owners. Those units were taken over by the Government of India and then subsequently they were nationalised. No Investment was made. There are the undertakings like the National Textiles Corporation, the NJMC etc. They were all in the private sector.

They were taken over and these units were closed down; not a single paisa was spent on them. In the case of Bengal Potteries, I had met the Prime Minister at least 25 to 30 times, – I had gone to meet the Prime Minister along with Kumari Mamata Banerjee; we had gone together, there is no difference of opinion between us when it comes to the interest of the labour force and the interest of any industry in West Bengal – but ultimately that prestigious company was wound up.

Without spending a single paisa, the Government has come to the conclusion now that this company cannot be revived. But there are some companies with potentiality which can be revived and one such company is the Rehabilitation Industries Corporation Limited. What was the object of setting up this company? The Rehabilitation Industries Corporation Limited was set up in 1959 by the Government of India in Calcutta with the primary objective of rehabilitating refugees from Bangladesh, Burma and Sri Lanka. Employment opportunities were sought to be created through the establishment of manufacturing facilities in low to average skill industries such as industrial estates, taxi

cooperative societies etc. The purpose of setting up this company was to rehabilitate the refugees. But now the Government has decided to wind up this company and that its shares should be sold out. Who will buy its shares?

Sir, the hon. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas is sitting here. I would submit that private companies will be ready to buy the share of GAIL and IPCL. But what was the recommendation of the Disinvestment Commission with regard to the sale of the share of IPCL? I quote:

"However, care should be taken while pre-qualifying bidders to ensure that strategic sale does not lead to market dominance by a single player."

By the term "single player" what was in the mind of the Disinvestment Commission? They thought that the majority of the shares should not go to any particular company. Now, the Reliance Industries Limited wants to buy the shares of IPCL to have dominance in the field of petrochemical products of our country. The Disinvestment Commission has categorically recommended against it. But that has not been taken into consideration while selling out the shares of IPCL.

Sir, we were surprised when the Government took a decision to sell out the shares of nine Jewels, which were called 'Navaratnas'. There are some public sector undertakings which are called mini-Ratnas.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Basu Deb Acharia, please conclude.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I have just started.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, only seven minutes have been allotted to your party by the Business Advisory Committee.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, this is a very important subject involving 242 public sector undertakings and an investment of Rs. 1,92,222 crore in these units. So, you allow me ... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Business Advisory Committee has allotted the time.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : This is for the sake of allotment. And for the Panel of Chairmen, there is no restriction. ... (Interruptions)

This is the main reason. The Government is facing serious economic crisis. The gross fiscal deficit is half done. The budgeted estimates in 1998-99 was around 22 per cent higher than the budgeted estimate. The tax and non-tax receipts have declined. The Government borrowings have been disproportionately high. Only in the month of April and June, Government has borrowed 40 per cent of the total yearly borrowings. The gross fiscal deficit for April, 1999

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

was Rs. 16,355 crore. In April, 1998, it was Rs. 12,355 crore. Thus, in order to bridge this fiscal deficit, they want to sell out even the blue-chip companies and the 'Navratnas' at throw away prices.

I would like to quote from an article written by Shri Prithish Nandy. He is neither a writer, nor a Member from the Opposition Benches but a Member from the Treasury Benches. Shri Geete will agree with me.

After the debate in the Rajya Sabha, Shri Nandy wrote an article and I quote:

"Last week in Parliament saw the Leftists arguing passionately against the GAIL disinvestment strategy followed by the BJP Government. So well argued was their case that I found myself, even as I sat in the treasury benches, in complete sympathy with them. For the shabby manner in which the disinvestment was done would put any self-respecting Government to shame."

He further said:

"The offloading of PSU stocks must be done within the strictest framework of public scrutiny. No Government has the mandate to sell off national institutions, some of them priceless value, built up by the dedication and efforts of millions of proud Indians (and the taxes you and I have paid, at absurdly high percentages of our income) for a song."

He has further said:

"No one should suspect that the family silver is being sold surreptitiously at the dead of night to those who are offering us but a fraction of their actual price. In that case, even the alliance partners of the BJP will have no option but to join the chorus of Opposition and ask for a parliamentary probe."

This is in regard to selling of shares of Gas Authority of India. I have said that the Government owes an explanation not only to this House but to the country at large. Why was the price reduced?

When, in 1977, the Government—whichever Government at that point of time was there—did not agree to sell it out at Rs. 125 per share, how can this Government sell out the shares of Gas Authority of India at a throw away price?

I demand that there should be a Parliamentary probe in the whole affairs of disinvestment of Gas Authority of India. Just after coming to power, how could they take such a decision against the interest of the nation? I oppose the entire disinvestment of public sector undertakings and I urge upon the Government that the PSUs, including the NTC. . .

[Translation]

Kashi Ram Rana ji, what are you reading? I am on your point. If Rs. 2300 crore had been generated by selling land at Mumbai in Maharashtra, entire N.T.C. could have been revived. We visited Mumbai and a small committee was constituted. The then Chief Minister of the State is the present Union Minister of Industry. We met Joshi ji but he did not agree to it and said that land will not be sold. So the Government did not get anything out of it. If the Government had raised 3000 crore rupees out of 18000 crore rupees, entire N.T.C. could have been revived.

SHRI RAM NAIK : Are you in favour of selling the land. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Why don't you want to dispose of the surplus land. ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : We co-operated with you. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

He went in that Committee along with the Minister.

SHRI RAM NAIK : I was also with them. But I opposed that.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Yes, he was also there accompanied by Shri Madhukar Sirpotdar. We went there along with Shri R. L. Jalappa.

So, I urge upon the Government to take urgent steps to revive the public sector undertakings which have the potentiality to be revived. In the interest of the workers and in the interest of the nation, the Government should stop this disinvestment policy, selling out the shares at throw away prices to the foreign and Indian companies. If the Government sells out shares at throw away prices, then how can India be built by Indians? This way India can be built by only Enrons and British Gas companies. Does the Government want that?

[Translation]

SHRI SOMNATH CHARTTERJEE : Listen to what Malkani ji is saying. ... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I have not quoted Shri Malkani as to what he said in the other House. He totally opposed the Disinvestment Policy. So, I oppose the disinvestment and I oppose this selling out of shares of the public sector undertakings.

I demand that there should be delinking of disinvestment from the Budgetary process of the Government.

I suggest the fund which has been raised to the extent of Rs. 18,222 crore be spent to revive the PSUs. Up to 30th November, 1999, out of Rs. 43,000 crore which was the target this year, they could raise only Rs. 14,000 crore. That is why, the Prime Minister thought it wise to create a separate Department for disinvestment.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : He is the liquidator.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : He is the official liquidator. Shri Jaitley, you are official liquidator.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. You have taken half-an-hour time.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am concluding. I have not taken half-an-hour. I have taken only 10 minutes time. So, I again urge upon the Government...

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : You do not urge. What is the use of urging? You demand.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : So, again I demand not to close down our Public Sector Undertakings, not to demolish the temples of modern India. you spend a sum of Rs. 18,000 crore to revive all our sick Public Sector Undertakings. Thank you.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Including NTC.

DR. B. B. RAMAIAH (Eluru) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, the main discussion is disinvestment which is the most important item. The three aspects which we have to see are: whether we should continue with the disinvestment; if it is so, for what purpose we have to do it; and how do we utilize the fund.

Disinvestment was started in the year 1991-92. The object was very clear. It was to see that we should be able to strengthen the strategic industries and also we give proper consideration for their sickness. What we said in the second object is also very clear. As Shri Acharia has mentioned, the policy and the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front Government, while focussing on the economic growth with social justice, emphasized that the Public Sector would continue to be an important component of Indian industry. It stated that any decision on disinvestment should be taken and implemented in a transparent manner. That is the main object.

Revenues generated from disinvestment should be utilised in the vital areas of health and education, particularly, in the poor and backward districts of the country. This is the main object. So, our main object now is to see whether this has been utilized, whether this object is practised and implemented.

The second thing that we find is that in the earlier disinvestment, there were a number of lapses. So, we said

we should start with the Disinvestment Commission. Of course, the tenure of Disinvestment Commission is over by 30th November. I am sure the Government will again reconsider and see that they should be able to strengthen the Disinvestment Commission.

Many hon. Members have mentioned so many issues. So many issues have come up. I do not want to go into those facts about IPCL, GAIL and various other organizations, how they have performed and what has happened to them. But we should strengthen these organizations. We should have proper people who can be able to really do justice in the country's interest. We should see that the workers' interest is protected carefully. This is the main object on which you have to say something.

Sometime ago, we started nationalizing our industries but later on we found there were some problems in nationalization. We also changed our policy due to circumstances and conditions of international and national policies of the Government. I know our hon. Member, Shri Somnath Chatterjee very well. In West Bengal, they want to invest in more industries and they want to have more participation. They want more collaboration to come. We are doing this in the interest of the country, workers and development. Everybody who is interested in the country's development would do that. In the process, sometimes, we may misuse; we may go in a wrong direction. So, we should always see that we go in the right direction. In other countries also, there is sickness either in the private sector or in the public sector, they are showing a lot of interest. So many countries are interested in it. But what is required is, how to strengthen this, how to utilize the resources of these organizations. That is why, the financial institutions or the banks or the Government should always see that the lapses are set right, either in collaboration or through mergers or amalgamation or in whatever possible way.

There are weaknesses which may be due to quality of the product or due to the technological evolutions or due to marketing strategy or some other things. We should not hesitate to see that that is put into operation rather than keeping them idle so that they make losses. (*Interruptions*).

Sir, as our hon. Members have said, I would like to see that they should be properly attended to without any hesitation and without any reservation. We want to see that the assets of these units must be utilised in the interests of the country and the people. That is the main object which we have to see.

Sir, some of the hon. Members have said that there are 242 units in the public sector, out of which 162 units are in the manufacturing sector and 74 units are in the services sector. But out of these units what we find is that 129 units are doing well and 104 units are losing heavily. So, this is the responsibility of the Government to see how they can be run effectively.

[Dr. B.B. Ramaiah]

I have visited a number of units at different places. What has happened in the case of Indian Telephone Industry? As long as they were selling to the Government, they made a profit of Rs. 200 crore. The moment it was decided that they have to compete with the other units, they lost Rs. 95 crore. That means they have big assets.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Now, they are making profits.

DR. B.B. RAMAIAH : I will tell you what had happened. I will give you all the details. Then, I told them how to do it. They have a lot of assets and manpower. I said that they require collaboration and technology in order to see that the manpower and resources can be utilised in the best interests. So, they changed the strategy. The same thing happened in the Bharat Electronics Limited. They were making only black and white TVs. I said that they should change the technology and should have a different collaboration methods. So, the policy of the Government should be able to save the industrial development of the country and utilise the resources usefully.

Sir, Rs. 1,93,000 crore is invested in the public sector. What is the return now? We are receiving dividend which is less than Rs. 10,000 crore. We need to strengthen these units. We have to see how to strengthen these units and disinvestment is one of the steps. What are the requirements of the social obligations of these units? We have said that there should be a Disinvestment Commission and we should also have a Development Fund. The purpose of this Development Fund should be to help the research and development of new technologies. This is how we can help them. For example, the units like Indian Telephone Industries, Bharat Electronics Limited, etc. also require the development of new technologies. These funds should be utilised to help them in the fields where they are lacking. I am sure that the hon. Minister will take these factors into consideration while utilising the funds.

We should look into another important aspect and that is the fiscal deficit. We are paying an interest of Rs. 88,000 crore. We should not blame one another. The country has been ruled by different parties at different points of time. There might have been different interests at that time. But we should see the present position. What had happened in the case of Asian giants. They are also facing problems today. So, we have to watch these things and we have to take a correct path by keeping in view the developments all over the world.

Our Defence expenditure is also going up. It is about Rs. 46,000 crore and it may even go up further. We never expected this to go up so much. Now, so much of funds are required to give relief to people in the case of natural

calamities like droughts, floods, earthquakes, cyclone, etc. So, sometimes what we are providing in the Budget is not sufficient due to such calamities. But we need resources and unless we adopt some other strengthening methods, our fiscal deficit will go on increasing and inflation also will go up. We have to see how to control this.

Sir, there are huge public sector undertakings like Indian Oil Corporation, Gas Authority of India Limited, Hindustan Machine Tools, Vizag Steel, etc. and restructuring of these units are very much required. Vizag Steel produces excellent quality products. They have good markets. But the Government should do restructuring of the finances of these units. The interest is a big liability for them. So, the part of the interest should be converted into equity. If this is done, they would be able to restructure the whole unit.

There is a tremendous potential in units like the Vizag Shipyard, etc. But what is required is the development of modern technology.

Now, disinvestment also has gone to different stages. Though it was started in 1991-92 with Rs. 3,038 crore, it has come to Rs. 1,913 crore in 1993-94. Later on, it has again picked up and it came to Rs. 4,000 crore in 1994-95.

Then again it became Rs. 362 crore. In 1998-99, it was Rs. 5,371 crore and this year again it has come down to Rs. 1,478 crore. We need at least Rs. 16,000 crore. That provision is there in the Budget. But what are the important things? The first thing is that we have to strengthen the market conditions. The second one is the market strategies. Another thing is that when we decide that we are going to disinvest in so much quantity, the market may depress. So, before we take any decision, we have to be careful about the market and the other things that are required, that is, how much you want to sell, to what extent you sell, and so on. The moment you say that you want to sell a huge quantity, the market again goes down. For deciding the strategy of these things, we need experts who are able to do the job, but still we need disinvestment. When to do this and how to do this is more important. So, across the party lines, we have to give our suggestions, our cooperation, our collaboration in the interest of the country, in the interest of development, in the interest of workers. I do not want to say that this is not the policy that we do it, but this is required for corrections. Huge corrections are very important and I look forward to everyone of you to be able to participate.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : I am sure, they have not even consulted you. They do not believe in consultation.

DR. B.B. RAMAIAH : Whatever it is, some of these things are required and, I am sure, they would be able to strengthen this ... (Interruptions)

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : It is decided by FICCI and CII.

DR. B.B. RAMAIAH : Well, I think no matter whatever it is. I said, this has to be done in the interest of the country, in the interest of the people, in the interest of the workers. No matter whoever does it, the country is more important, the object is more important, not the basis on which probably some of these things have happened. ... (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now please conclude. You have taken five minutes extra. You were allotted only six minutes but you have taken five minutes more.

DR. B.B. RAMAIAH : Sir, the purpose of today's discussion is only to see what are the things that have happened, what are the problems that are being faced and what are the suggestions that we can give. That is the main objective of this discussion. I still feel that disinvestment has to be done, but it has to be done in a proper way, by a proper method, and the Government should take all these things into consideration before they go further. I thank you very much, Sir.

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram) : Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on disinvestment policy of the Government. Having participated in the discussion on sick public sector undertakings, it is my bounden duty to say something about the disinvestment policy of this Government.

The Disinvestment Commission was set up by a Resolution passed on 23rd August, 1996. It is only an advisory body. Recently then have come to a conclusion that a separate department will be set up. What for? To contribute more to close down all the public sector undertakings and to declare 242 public sector units as sick units! I want to know the functions of this separate department, which was not there for all these years? I want to know from the hon. Minister what is the criteria fixed by the Government for any disinvestment. I want a pointed answer for this.

Having decided about disinvestment, is it a fact that the shares are sold at a lower rate than the rate at which these should be sold in the market? What makes them to sell these shares at a lower rate? Where is the hurry? What is the compulsion and what are all the public sector undertakings that are coming under this specific group?

Thirdly, I would like to know whether it is a fact that preference is given for foreign companies than the local companies, and if so why?

I am a Member of Parliament from Tamil Nadu. I am a doctor by profession. I submit that slowly the disinvestment policy is encroaching more upon the health sector thereby the aim of achieving Health for All by 2010 will be totally defeated. The Hindustan Photofilms Limited to Ooty in Tamil Nadu is manufacturing X-Ray films. It has been referred to BIFR. I want a White Paper to be placed on the Table of the House about it because I want to know more about the details

of that company. Patients, not only from Tamil Nadu but from all over India, are suffering for want of the investigation material. They are also being put to great hardship.

In this connection I demand from the Government as to why they are not thinking about having separate Employment Exchanges for the workers who are working in these Public Sector Undertakings and who would soon be out of employment. It is easy to declare a Unit as a sick Public Sector Undertaking. But what is the Government proposing to do with those workers who are working in these sick PSUs? They are to be properly placed. There are many problems from the workers' side. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to have a separate Employment Exchange for these workers so that the rehabilitation process is hastened.

Most of my senior colleagues have pointed out many things about GAIL which is a surprise and shock not only to the Members of Parliament but to the entire people of India. The Government should be committed for the decisions it takes.

It is rather a surprise to me. Why have you taken up the disinvestment of even the profit-making industries also? What was the necessity or compulsion? The Government should come out with details. How are you spending the money that is accrued through this disinvestment? It is said that it will be used for the health facilities and for the social obligations. But it is only on paper. I want to know the exact details.

In its Eighth Report, the Disinvestment Commission said:

"The Commission is pleased to note that subsequent to its Fifth Report, Government is firming up plans for sale of Government equity in GAIL, CONCOR, and Indian Oil Corporation during the current fiscal year and that decisions have been taken on some of the recommendations of the Commission made in its earlier Reports such as granting greater autonomy to PSUs and induction of non-official directions".

I feel that the obligation of the PSUs for the social sector is also the same.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Madam, your Party has been allotted two minutes. I have given you five more minutes. Please conclude by 6 p.m.

DR. V. SAROJA : Thank you Sir.

I want to know from the Government whether it is proposed to offer shares of the Public Sector Undertakings to general public instead of offering a whole block of shares to some selected companies.

[Dr. V. Saroja]

I would like to know one thing from the hon. Minister. What is the present status of this? It may not be out of place to mention if I say that when the discussion about the sick Public Sector Undertakings was going on last time, the hon. Minister had promised that a White Paper would be placed before the House regarding all these Public Sector Undertakings. Therefore, I request that a White Paper should be placed before the House on the Disinvestment Policy and also about the institutions which fall under this Policy.

I suggest that the Government's Policy should adopt schemes for the welfare of the people, and should not be at

the cost and suffering of them, and also not affecting the Indian public and its economy.

MR. CHAIRMAN : We will continue this discussion tomorrow. The House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow at 11.00 a.m.

1800 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, December 17, 1999/Agrahayana 26, 1921 (Saka).
